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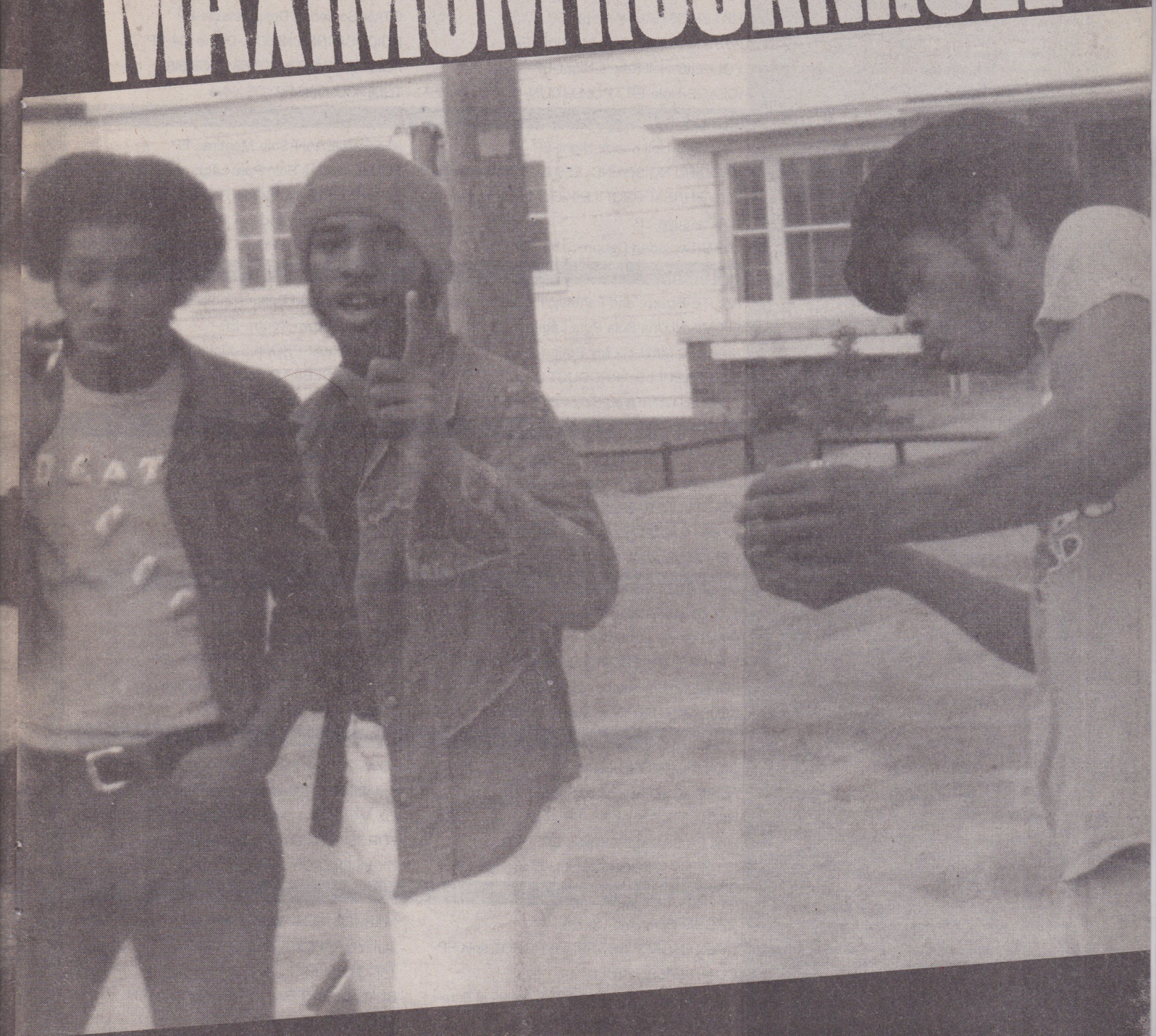
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL



DEATH · DEFENSA ABSOLUTA · SUGI
DRY-ROT · DRUID PERFUME · KIM PHUC
2009 YEAR-END TOP TENS · AND MORE

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
179-181, 184, 186-192, 194-197, 199, 204, 206, 208-215, 218, 221-225, 227, 229-236, 238-247, 249-306, 308-321

See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

MARIAM BASTANI – NEW TOP TEN!!!

- ACUTE-Bizarre and Fantasy, I'm Masochistic-EP
- HITLER SS/TAMPAX-split EP
- KESE MUERAN-Solo Mentiras-EP
- FOLKEIIS-Hell Kaaos Night-EP
- ICEAGE-Hole-EP / POLLUTION-N.S. Drugs-EP
- PEACE OR ANNIHILATION-EP
- OTAN-Sociedad Despreciable-EP
- RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA-Demo '04-EP
- POLISKITZO/DESMADRES EL CRISIS/ TUBERCULOSIS/RAYOS X-live

JUSTIN BRIGGS

- FOLKEIIS-Hell Kaaos Night-EP
- BASTARD NOISE/ENDLESS BLOCKADE-split CD
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Kick My Heart-EP
- V/A-Yotsuva-LP
- OTAN-Sociedad Despreciable-EP
- KESE MUERAN-Solo Mentiras-EP
- FIX ME-Ni Una Sola Puta Lágrima-LP
- BOG PEOPLE-tape / ARCTIC FLOWERS-tape
- VACCUUM-tape and live
- PERDITION/TUBERCULOSIS/POLISKITZO-live

TIM BROOKS

- ACUTE-Bizarre and Fantasy, I'm Masochistic-EP
- FIX ME-Ni Una Sola Puta Lágrima-LP
- MARKED MEN-Fix My Brain-LP
- PETROLEUM BY-PRODUCT-LP
- SMALLTOWN-Read Between the Lines-10"
- OTAN-Sociedad Despreciable-EP
- HYGIENE-Town Centre-EP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Kick My Heart-EP
- THEE OH SEES-LP
- DEZERTER-Historia-2xLP

ROBERT COLLINS

- LA VOZ-live and demo
- OK?-This Is Only a Test-45
- BORN LOSER-Piece of Shit-EP
- KESE MUERAN-Solo Mentiras-EP
- PEACE OR ANNIHILATION-EP
- FIX ME-Ni Una Sola Puta Lágrima-LP
- PETROLEUM BY-PRODUCT-LP
- UNDER AL KRITIK-LP
- PILLS-live
- FOLKEIIS-Hell Kaaos Night-EP

LAYLA GIBBON

- THE EYES-TAQN-10"
- OTAN-Sociedad Despreciable-EP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Kick My Heart-EP
- FOLKEIIS-Hell Kaaos Night-EP
- KESE MUERAN-Solo Mentiras-EP
- HITLER SS/TAMPAX-split EP
- HYGIENE-Town Centre-EP
- POLLUTION-EP / SLAVE SCENE-EP
- OK?-This Is Only a Test-45 and live
- ICEAGE-EP / LE FACE-LP

BOB GOLDIE

- SICK MORMONS-EP
- BORN LOSER-Piece of Shit-EP
- HIGH LIFE-Self Abuse-EP
- HITLER SS/TAMPAX-split EP
- CITIZENS PATROL-Start the Slaughter-EP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Kick My Heart-EP
- SMALLTOWN-Read Between the Lines-10"
- FIX ME-Ni Una Sola Puta Lágrima-LP
- FORCE FED-Turn Your Amp-EP
- UX VILEHEADS-First-EP

KENNY KAOS

- GAGGERS-Fix Me Up-EP
- OPEN CASKET/SCRABBLE ROBOT-split EP
- CUTE LEPERS-45
- CONCEPCION GLORY BOYS-Hacia el Este-LP
- VAPID-Practically Dead-LP
- MARKED MEN-Fix My Brain-LP
- TOKYO ELECTRON-AZ 238-LP
- TACO LEG-EP
- BLACKHEART SAINTS-Sick In Love-EP
- SICK MORMONS-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- TY SEGALL & MIKAL CRONIN-LP
- TOKYO ELECTRON-AZ 238-LP
- GAGGERS-Fix Me Up-EP
- TYVEK-Blunt Instrumental-12"
- KING AUTOMATIC-45
- DRUID PERFUME-Other Worlds-45
- THE POINTS-Beat In Hell-EP
- SOCIAL CIRCKLE-On the Run/Police Police-45
- FAILURES-I'm Busy-EP
- EYES-TAQN-10"

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

VINNIE LARUSSA

- BASTARD NOISE/ENDLESS BLOCKADE-split CD
- FOLKEIIS-Hell Kaaos Night-EP
- KESE MUERAN-Solo Mentiras-EP
- OTAN-Sociedad Despreciable-EP
- FIX ME-Ni Una Sola Puta Lágrima-LP
- REACTIONARIES-Ingenuity-LP
- MARKED MEN-Fix My Brain-LP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Kick My Heart-EP
- HITLER SS/TAMPAX-split EP
- ACUTE-Bizarre and Fantasy, I'm Masochistic-EP

RAY LUJAN

- SMALLTOWN-Read Between the Lines-10"
- NERVOUS SYSTEMS-Needs Medicines-LP
- TOKYO ELECTRON-AZ 238-LP
- CUTE LEPERS-Smart Accessories-CD
- HANNA HIRSCH-Tala Svart-LP
- HADDONFIELDS-We Are Not Alone-CD
- NAKATOMI PLAZA-Ghosts-CD
- DAN PADILLA-A Collection Not Perfection-LP
- MARKED MEN-Fix My Brain-LP
- AUTONOMADIC-CD / VAPID-LP

MARK MURRMANN

- KING AUTOMATIC-From Commercial Road-45
- HITLER SS/TAMPAX-split EP
- HORRIBLY WRONG-C'mon and Bleed With...-LP
- GAGGERS-Fix Me Up-EP
- DRUID PERFUME-Other Worlds-45
- TOKYO ELECTRON-AZ 238-LP
- THE MEN-We Are the Men-12"
- THE POINTS-Beat In Hell-EP
- SOCIAL CIRCKLE-On the Run/Police Police-45
- TYVEK-Blunt Instrumental-12"

BRUCE ROEHRS

- HAMMER AND THE NAILS-Set To Ruin-CD
- UNDER AL KRITIK-LP
- UX VILEHEADS-First-EP
- HIGH LIFE-Self Abuse-EP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Kick My Heart-EP
- SICK MORMONS-Shit Keeps Falling-EP
- SOCIAL CIRCKLE-45 / CLOAK/DAGGER-45
- CITIZENS PATROL-EP / VACANT STATE-EP
- FOLKEIIS-EP / BAD ASSETS-CD
- BIG RATS-Failures-EP

FRED SCHRUNK

- THE SIOUX/LEXOMYL-split EP
- OK?-This Is Only a Test-45
- MUTOID MEN-Mutoid World-LP
- DELAY-Plain Language-LP
- DAN PADILLA-A Collection Not Perfection-LP
- HANNA HIRSCH-Tala Svart-LP
- CHIN UP, MERIWETHER-Fruition-LP
- BOSSY-The Best Of Bossy-LP
- ACUTE-Bizarre and Fantasy, I'm Masochistic-EP
- FLESHIES-Brown Flag-LP

CISSIE SCURLOCK

- FOLKEIIS-Hell Kaaos Night-EP
- OTAN-Sociedad Despreciable-EP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Kick My Heart-EP
- KESE MUERAN-Solo Mentiras-EP
- V/A-Yotsuva-LP
- MANIPULATION-tape / BOG PEOPLE-tape
- ARCTIC FLOWERS-tape
- PEACE OR ANNIHILATION-EP
- TUBERCULOSIS/RAYOS X/POLISKITZO/ DESMADRES EL CRISIS-live

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- FIX ME-Ni Una Sola Puta Lágrima-LP
- BIG RATS-Failures-EP
- KESE MUERAN-Solo Mentiras-EP
- FOLKEIIS-Hell Kaaos Night-EP
- OTAN-Sociedad Despreciable-EP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Kick My Heart-EP
- SICK MORMONS-Shit Keeps Falling-EP
- SEEIN RED-Pogo-EP
- VACANT STATE-Infernal Conflict-EP
- CITIZENS PATROL-Start the Slaughter-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Arbre Magique #1*
- *Distort #26*
- *Cometbus #53*
- *Snarlas Tour 2009*
- *Nosebleed #1*
- *Baitline #9*
- *Gutwrench #2 & #3*
- *The Black Cloud #3*
- *Left of the Dial "Remix"*
- *At Both Ends #9/10*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution." Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrüx, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September'05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One). History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade., Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resörte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kykloopien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Gitida, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#307/December '08. SOLD OUT!!! Sorry...

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#314/July '09. Libyans, Coke Bust, Strange Boys, Turboslut, Vogue, Smart Cops, Zyanose, Dennis Dread, a History of Squatting in Italy, Tornonto Scene Report.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown,Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#317/October '09. Queer issue. with Nastyfacts, Gary Floyd, Limp Wrist, Jos Seein' Red, GB Jones, Younger Lovers, Vaginal Davis, Josh Ploeg, Teu Pai Já Sabe?, Schwarzer Kanal, Bromance, Extra Tongue, and more.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids, Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault, Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#320/January '10. MRR Top Ten of the Decade, D-Clone, Broken Water, Complications, Control, Ian Glasper (*The Day the Country Died/Burning Britain)*

#321/February '10. Photo issue special featuring Patrick Baclet, Helge Schreiber, Murray Bowles, Larry Wolfley, Canderson, Icki, Chrissy Piper, Karoline Collins, Mateus Mondini, Daigo Oliva, Gary Go!, and more

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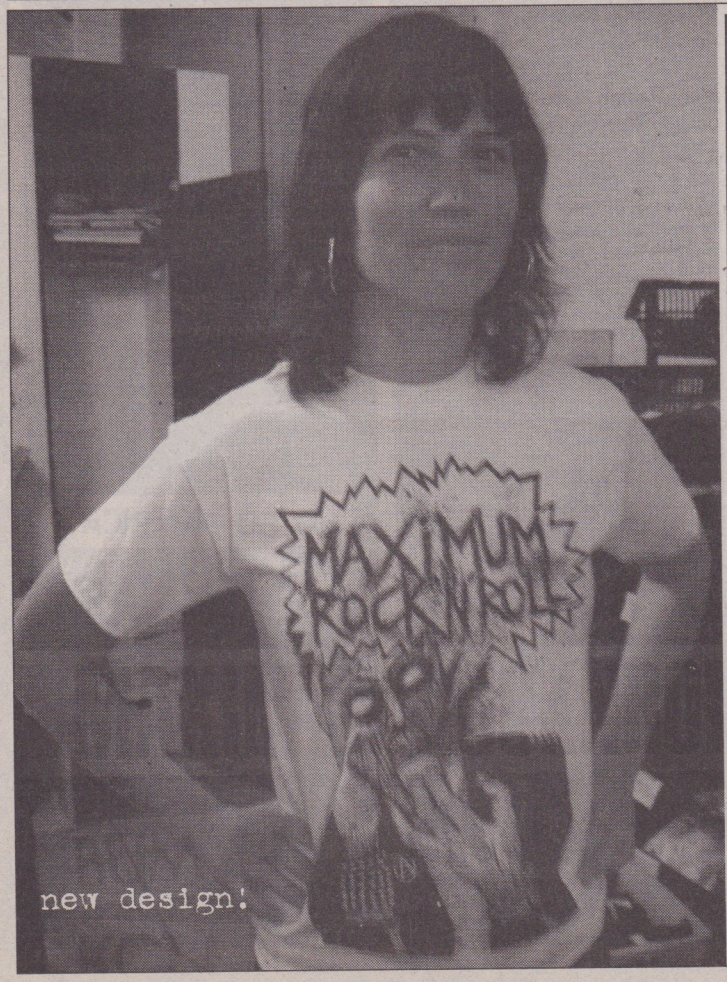

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Dear MRR,

Helen Degenerate reviewed my band, the Mark Sparkles, in the last issue of *MRR* (#321). We appreciate criticism and realize that it is a part of the whole record review process and just being a band in general. But as a member, major contributor and woman, I was upset that our band was deemed "pissed off at women" and later referred to as a band that "rules if you hate women..." The reviewer seemed to take issue primarily with the song "Mean Girls." The song title was meant to be a play on the movie of the same name. While the movie deals with the subject of stereotypical, mean, high school girls in a comedic fashion, the lyrics of the song take the collective experiences of our band members with similar "mean girls." Nowhere in the song does it say that every woman is mean, only that some women are mean, just like some men could be considered mean and it just happened that everyone in our band (myself included) has had recent encounters with the aforementioned "mean girl."

The line that the reviewer was particularly offended by and proceeded to quote was, "How could someone so beautiful treat people that way?" The reviewer automatically assumes that this means that the beautiful woman mentioned in the song is surrounded by assholes who "embitter" and "essentialize" her. I understand that this is Helen's interpretation of the lyrics, and she has a right to her interpretation, but it seems like she is liberally associating our lyrics with potentially un-associated topics. Why automatically assume the worst? Couldn't that line more simply just mean that looks are only skin deep? That even those people beautiful on the outside can be less beautiful on the inside? While the "someone" in the song is implied to be a woman, this line could really apply to someone of either sex, as could most of the lyrics. After re-reading the lyrics multiple times, I really don't understand how anyone could assume them to be misogynistic. There are no instances where women as a whole are stereotyped, instead we talk about specific instances with specific women, which hopefully serves to make our experiences more immediate to whoever is listening to our record.

What really upset me most was how pointing this sort of thing out does little to help the position of women in contemporary society. By immediately assuming that a song about mean girls is bashing on all women only serves to highlight how differently men and women are treated. Had our song been entitled "Mean Boys" and been about men instead of women, our lyrics would probably have been considered really dumb, but I doubt that we would have been accused of essentializing men. Similarly, had I (a woman) sung the lyrics, I think we would have garnered a completely different sort of review. Of course, if our lyrics really were explicitly bashing women, I would hope this would be pointed out, in the same way that I hope that lyrics marginalizing any group of people would be pointed out. But, our lyrics are not, by any stretch of the imagination, doing this. So, a review like this really makes me realize how differently men and women are still treated.

This aside, we really did appreciate the review, it made us think which is what reviews are supposed to do I hope. All I want to do with this letter is to set the record straight: "THE MARK SPARKLES DO NOT HATE WOMEN." We plan to continue to send you our material for review.

Thanks,
—Erica,
Guitar,
The Mark Sparkles
ericab6@u.washington.edu

I accept the fact that often times the writer/performer of lyrics is not always intended to be the narrator. This was, in fact, an oversight on my part with this review. However, since you're already so upset about it, I'll talk more than I need to right now.

You say that had your song been about "mean boys" instead of "mean girls" I would have only thought that your lyrics were dumb. On the contrary, I would definitely respond in the same fashion had the line been, "How could a man so handsome be so mean?" or whatever shitty reflection of a narrow perception of a person's behavior could be.

I have no idea what you're arguing with me about if the song is about a movie about "stereotypes" and also about your band's collective experience with this "stereotype." Doesn't that just mean that you are letting an admitted parody define your interactions with specific people, in this case women who are both "beautiful" and "mean?"

And finally, I never said that the Mark Sparkles hate women, I said that the reader of the review would probably like the Mark Sparkles if they hate women. Kind of like how I really like Lady Gaga because I like drag queens, not because I like shitty club music. Oh yeah, and I just want to remind you that just because you identify as a woman doesn't mean you don't still hate them, us, yourself, etc.

—Helen Degenerate

Dear MRR—

Hey thanks for the nice review in the new issue, only problem is our name is Cruddy. D'oh! Guess we took a few too many liberties on the typography (although the name is type-written on the insert). Any way you could run it again next month under the correct name? This is our first record and as you know well, an MRR review is important for a new band.

Thanks,
—Drew

When you only have the word "Crujay" on the cover of your record, it's a little confusing you gotta admit...

Dear MRR,

I just received the February 2010 issue, the first in my subscription and, as usual, you guys got it to me in a quick manner...just as the back issue I ordered from you. Thanks for the quick response and great zine. I've been reading MRR since around 1992 and it's good to see MRR still going strong all this time.

I am currently serving a three-year sentence in a Massachusetts state prison and when I found out I could have MRR mailed to me here, it made day.

There are no other punks here to hang out with and talk about good bands, books, films, the NYC, Boston and the Texas scene (I'm

from Houston), There are a couple of metal heads here into stuff like Cannibal Corpse, Deicide, etc... and that's cool. Thankfully this isn't the 1980s when Metal heads and punks fought each other.

Also, I can't have my CDs in here because the Massachusetts Dept. of Corrections considers CDs "potential weapons." Ha. I know of some good punk rock CDs that can kill, but the D.O.C. here takes it literally.

If there are any punks out there between 25-45 years old and would like to become penpals to help me pass the next 18 months I have left in here, please write me. I am a 40-year-old punker from Houston, Texas, and into such bands from the Ramones to Leftover Crack and many more. I also like the NUC and Boston scene, good books and films. Don't send stickers, CDs or zines... and the D.O.C. is picky how magazines and books are sent.
Thanks *MRR*,
—Eric Conalty #W94012
30 Adminsitration, RD.
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Dear MRR—
Just letting you know, you included one of these photos in your photo issue, but got the caption very wrong. You guys have "Photo of Nodzzz by Manny Mares," however, the picture you included was a photo of Pigeon Religion taken by Danny Noodz. I don't really care but figured you should know, as the photographer might care.
—J
Pigeon Religion

Hi MRR staff and Mr Roehrs—
I was just reading the December issue (it takes a while for *MRR* to arrive here in the Netherlands), and I was really enjoying it, until I read Bruce Roehrs decade top ten list. So now racist songs are suddenly cool because they "push the button on PC punks?" Well, it pushed some of my buttons for sure, though I've never introduced myself to anyone as a "PC punk." Now we can discuss what and who is "PC" for ages, but that's not my point. Maybe I'm naive, but I'd like to believe that racism also pushes some buttons elsewhere. In a lot of places. Because racism fucking sucks. Are you an over sensitive nerd when you feel that racism isn't funny, but offensive, wrong, stupid, detestable and so on? I hope not...

Here in the Netherlands anti-immigration politics and the racist PVV party are getting more popular every day. In the city where I live this party is the biggest one in the polls for the upcoming city council elections in March. Racism here is real and people have to deal with that every single day. One of the reasons that I got attracted to DIY punk in the first place was the way it tried to be some sort of alternative to mainstream society. A place where in theory everyone is welcome, and people fight against oppression. A place where there is no place for racism.

Now I know punk isn't perfect, and neither is *MRR*. Punk is not some sort of utopia, and yes often we talk the talk but don't walk the walk. But writing in our magazines that racist songs are cool because they push some fucking buttons? I almost feel like I have to explain why racism isn't a good thing, and it actually makes me quite pissed off that a punk magazine that I really love makes me feel this way.
Cheers,
—Maarten
The Netherlands

Dear Layla—
In your column you mention hard decisions being made regarding the magazine, I can imagine some things are tough—however, I thought of one decision that might make things easier. Perhaps some of your monthly contributors can be quietly canned, while others might have their roles expanded.

Please sack "The Last Punk"—Brace Belden! I have read his columns for some time now, and I think there's been twice where I either thought that he had something interesting to say or he said something that challenged what I thought and I took the time to evaluate what I thought about something. In short, Mr. Belden has written upwards of eight sentences that were worth the paper, ink and cost of getting *MRR* to a newsstand near me. I'm a pretty open minded fella, relatively well educated, been around the scene for a while (I'm pushing 40), and I must say that his column seems like someone thinks *MRR* needs an "edgy" columnist. YOU DON'T NEED ONE!

"Basement Screams" has to be one of the most useful columns ever to be printed for musicians (and there are surely many in your readership); Felix Von Havoc is like a punk rock dad, dropping wisdom and history like no other; Osa Atoe constantly makes me reevaluate my actions past and present, and realize how I likely angered people when I speak and act from ignorance (and she's gotta be making a change in punks that will affect our community for the better!).

There's always the expansion of the letters section...

And tell folks to stop trashing "consumerist internet punks who are commodifying our scene," blah, blah, blah, ad nauseum. At least don't trash these folks when *MRR* reviews limited edition runs of 100 7"s by bands who are obviously trying to cash in on their punk rock fifteen minutes and dreams of eBay virtual dollars...

Hope I sent this to someone who gives a damn (or who will forward it to someone who does), and though it is New Year's Eve, no I'm not drunk. (Although I've had too much Brace). *MRR* should look to cutting out the crap that might be running *MRR* into the ground.
Yours in baffled rage,
—Justin Otherpunk
(Ha, ha, get it?)

Justin—
The columns section features content that I personally do not agree with, some of which I also find offensive. We try and have a balance of writers that will appeal to all the different people that consider themselves part of the DIY punk underground. That's sort of a roundabout way of saying that MRR *is by the punks for the punks. Some punks aim to provoke, some aim to enlighten, some just want to get wasted, some say shit that makes me wish they considered themselves part of some other subculture far from my world.*

It's true that I am the coordinator of the magazine, so technically I decide what goes in it in terms of hiring and firing columnists, well, apart from the ones that are un-fireable per Tim's wishes. But I don't see Maximum Rocknroll *as being a portal for only my ideas, beliefs and vision. I see it as an attempt to reflect all aspects of the punk idea, the sense of possibility, the international grassroots community, along with the radical and the reactionary nature of the movement. The thoughtless shitbags alongside those that are attempting to make change? I don't know.*

It's something I think about and debate frequently—when there's shit in the magazine that I find embarrassing and ignorant, do I run it? Censor it? Things have definitely run that I would have edited out, but missed due to exhaustion and the insane workload this job entails. Things that my friends and readers of the magazine have called me on. I understand that while every page of this magazine may not reflect my own convictions, I have to answer for it all as one of the content coordinators. I try and put content in to counter the stuff I find objectionable. I think every content coordinator has wrestled with this issue, and we definitely do edit some shit out,

I think letting things run as they are can be sort of better in some ways. It may reflect badly on me or the magazine, but it allows the readership to see a wide range of opinions and come to their own conclusions as to the dubious nature of some of those opinions expressed...

Thanks for writing—it's good to know that people like you read the magazine with a critical and thoughtful eye.
—Layla

SIX TWO FIVE

OUT AUTUMN/WINTER '09:

PARLIAMENTARISK SODOMI - EP
Brand new EP:1-man grinding blast

V/A-Bay Area Thrash Detonation
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YOUNG OFFENDERS/GIANT HAYSTACKS
Split 12"LP-anthemic angry post-punk

FLAT OUT - Debut EP
Debut-650/Bay Area Blasting Fastcore

INSECT WARFARE - 1-Sided 12"LP
Crazed-noise-blast.The last recording

PUNCH - Debut 12"LP
Insane no-holds fastcore from Norcal

SFN - New EP
Midwest powerviolence-the new generation

GET DESTROYED! - Last EP
The final recording of this AZ blast-unit

INFANTICIDE - EP
Straight-forward,no-BS Swedish grind

FLIPOUT AxAx - Flipout CD
Classic Tokyo HC/Thrash-punk.Ex-LIE

DISCARGA - 3rd CD
NEW! 18-songs of highspeed thrash

RUNNING FOR COVER - LP
All hail 1000mph powerviolence

THE PROCESS - Debut CD
Punishing HC ala RINWORM, X-SHANK

INFECT - Discography CD
Cult,all female thrash from Brazil

AGENTS OF ABHORRANCE - CD
Crazed Aussie 3-man blurrcore

THREATENER - Discography CD
Coll.CD of 1000mph blasting fastcore

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CHARM/UG MAN-Split LP:Tokyo thrashcore
CRUCIAL SECTION/HIT ME BACK-EP:Int'l HC
KUNGFU RICK - Disco 2xCD:Insane grind/HC
IRON LUNG/SHANK LP/CD-Audio Brutality
BREAKFAST 2nd LP:Tokyo skate-thrash
SECOND OPINION - CD High Energy thrash
BARBARIC THRASH CD COMPS:Euro,CaliComps
CRUCIAL SECTION-LP: 80s RIPCORD-thrash
SHANK-LP/CD: 1000mph power violence
MACHINEGUN ROMANTICS-CD: TX fastcore
QUILL/I DONT CARE-Split CD:Tokyo thrash
APARTMENT 213-CD:Clevo power violence
HE WHO CORRUPTS CD: Corporo-grind-o-caust
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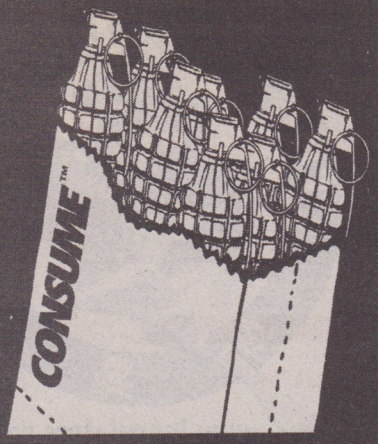

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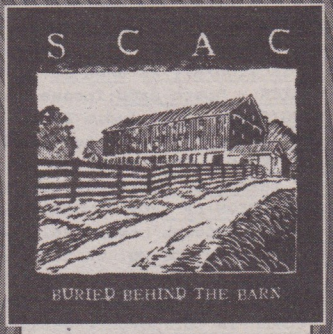

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COLUMNS

There is a scene in the 1949 Film Noir classic *The Third Man* that has always made a strong impression on me. The racketeer who has been selling bootleg antibiotics takes the film's protagonist up into a ferris wheel. Looking down on the people below the racketeer says, "look at the people below, they are just tiny dots, would you really feel any pity if one of those dots stopped moving, forever. If you got twenty thousand pounds every time one did, would you really turn it down?" To me this is one of the best artistic representations of the rationalization of immoral behavior for profit, something of a parable of our times.

When investors demand more profits from corporations, prices are raised, and costs are cut. If a drug company charges a higher and higher price for a drug so that many people who cannot afford it, die rather than get treatment, some of those dots stop moving forever. When companies like Enron manipulate energy markets causing blackouts, and people die due to inoperative traffic lights, more of those dots stop moving. In a world where corporate elites control more and more resources and governments, choices are made that are rational and benign on the surface, but have real human impacts, some of them mortal.

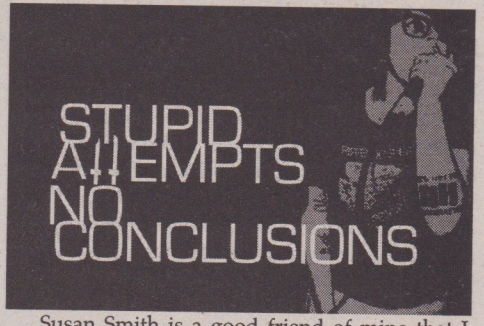
Economists talk a lot about "winners and losers" the current global economy has greatly rewarded the winners with unheard of wealth, and commensurate political influence. But it has similarly robbed the losers of many reasonable chances of improving their livelihood under such a system. Africa is poorer today than it was twenty years ago, poorer indeed, than it was under European colonization. America is fractured into a world of a fabulous wealth and a world of struggling poverty with a shrinking middle class between. The rapid development of countries like China and India has led to super profits for a small elite, and continued poverty for many.

In the punk scene, it's common place to see issues in black and white, to reduce complex problems to something that will fit on a patch or a sticker. It's easy to blame a sinister conspiracy for the world's problems. The truth is more complicated, it's not a cabal of conspirators, but thousands of corporations, banks, national elites, hedge funds, investors, private equity groups and politicians each pursuing their own objectives which lead to the poverty, inequality and oppression. One thing is for sure, things are the way they are because there are winners and losers. The status quo is preserved because vested interests make great profits from it being so. From time to time we see televised images of victims of famine, genocide, and disease. For each of these losers, there is probably a winner. Some profits accumulate in a Swiss or American bank account at the expense of a community's ability to feed itself or treat its sick. When politicians start talking, it always makes sense to dig a little deeper and "follow the money" and ask who will be the winners and losers. Many thousands of people have passed through the punk scene over this magazine's lifetime. I should hope that if nothing else, they picked up a heightened sense for bullshit and can see through the posturing and propaganda of modern times. That is to say every punk or ex-punk, should have their own bullshit detector.

Although I am very concerned about global warming and pollution, I question the ability of our current system to address these issues. There is a small chance that technology and regulation can be used to address the environmental ills that face the world. However, the real and drastic solutions that are probably in order run counter to the vested interests that profit from the status quo. They have everything to gain and little to lose from keeping things the way they are. When politicians meet to set environmental policy (or health care policy, or whatever) they get to pick the winners and losers. The corporations, banks, hedge funds, and national elites have a seat at these tables, but no one except for a few protesters or activists is there to represent the working people, the poor, the environment etc. While the protesters go to jail, the real criminals make sure that the rules are written in their favor.

So we have to ask the question, are issues like the environment, global warming or issues that can be tackled by the current system? Or does radical social change have to precede any meaningful advance on those issues? If radical social change is a distant dream, is it quixotic or realistic to struggle for reform and change within the existing system? Does anyone believe that the current health care reform will challenge the health care industry or insurance companies? This is doubtful; history has shown that it takes mass action in the streets to pressure the political system to push through meaningful reform. Will people have to riot in the streets and bomb hospitals to get better health care?

I used to write a lot about early '80s hardcore in these pages. These days with MP3 blogs and the like, that part of my goal seems somewhat superseded. However, here's a little rager from the late '80s I keep coming back to. New York City's Outburst put out a raging 7" in 1989 on Blackout Records. In the pantheon of NYHC these guys are probably pretty close to the bottom of the heap. To me though the *Miles to Go* EP is just brimming with youthful energy, powerful hardcore jams and surprisingly insightful lyrics. Clearly this band started after being inspired by the Youth Crew and NYHC bands of the era, but this record tops a lot of better known bands with its strong compositions and sick production. It's got the crunch you would expect from NYHC without a lot of the pretense that came with bands trying to push a more thug image. There is of course a song warning anyone from stabbing the band in the back, but a look at the photos on the cover gives the impression of a happy go lucky group of high school friends more than a serious crew you wouldn't want to meet in a dark alley. The lyrics at first seem pretty standard fare, backstabbers, scene elitists etc. but the lyrics to "Mission Impossible" and "Miles To Go" show a sophistication in social observation that belies a greater wisdom that we typically associate with the genre. Unlike a lot of other records from this era, I can still remember the songs and lyrics to this one after twenty years. There was talk of a reissue of this EP in Germany some years ago, but I'm not sure if it ever happened, either way this one is not exactly a list topper, so keep your eyes peeled as it's sure to pop up cheaply and is worth picking up.



Susan Smith is a good friend of mine that I met when she lived in Portland and I lived in Vancouver. Now I live in the city she grew up in, and I get to see her when she visits home and she is weirded out that I'm here, with these people.

"You're friends with that kid?" she says. "He's like a baby." "Nah," I say. "He's like twenty. Kind of an adult. He lets me borrow his amp. It's cool." When Susan is around, we have the eternal and universal big-city-versus-small-town punk debate and that other played punk topic: being a token lady in punk and the responsibilities that come with it. We went to the Bagel Cafe the other week to talk about some boring shit, even though my boyfriend used to work there and I know that when the toilet overflows, the pee-poo water leaks into the dish pit.

Juls: How long have you lived in Toronto and where did you move from?

Susan: I grew up in St. Johns. I moved to Toronto (twelve times the population) in 2005. I also lived in Portland, Oregon for nearly two years.

Juls: How old were you when you left Newfoundland? What caused the move?

Susan: I left Newfoundland when I was about 23. I had been going to punk shows there for about ten years at that point; I started out as a spoiled kid who ruined shows, and ended up doing a lot of the work to run them in the end. When I went to see Left For Dead in Toronto in 2004 and actually had fun at a show instead of babysitting 300 kids, I knew that it I was ready to leave my small city for the big city.

Juls: Did you always know that you would leave Newfoundland?

Susan: I actually thought I would never move away, a huge part about our culture is moving away to work and coming home to rest. I always felt the need to stay here, and as friends left one by one, that grew stronger. But I guess the time came where I was done. The punk scene here is super important to me, but new punk kids had taken the reigns and I had no doubts that it would flourish. I wasn't wrong.

Juls: What was your role or involvement in punk in Newfoundland and what do you do in Toronto?

Susan: Looking back on my role in Newfoundland, I did a lot of community organizing. I put together punk shows, but also invited kids to come help set up, work the door. I would sometimes have craft supplies for print-making available before a show just to hang out and make art. I also had afternoon craft parties on Sundays at my house. Me and my partner at the time would prepare Sunday dinners, getting people together to have food is a very important part of my culture. After all-ages shows, we would have dance parties with the sound equipment and the venue we had rented for the show since the keys didn't have to be back until the following day. We would wait until the young kids left and the beer and older kids would pile in and dance till 6am to pop punk, it was awesome and super fun! Whoever wanted would sleep there and help clean up in the morning. I also attempted to have regular movie nights, featuring gang, punk, or juvenile delinquent movies.

Juls: What about Toronto?

Susan: Well, since I moved away from Newfoundland I like to say that I have retired from organizing shows. I had totally burned myself out. I think maybe I did two or three at a tiny punk bar now defunct called Planet Kensington. I'm super stoked to just attend shows right now and see lots of awesome bands and stand up front and meet people and hang out. I also try to go to the punk radio show every Sunday and play records because right now it's like four dudes doing it and I really think there should be at least one lady involved and I spend all my money on records so it just makes sense to go and hang out for a few hours and talk about bands and new releases. That's just one thing I decided to do this year for myself, to go and participate in the radio show.

Juls: What made you start doing shows in Newfoundland?

Susan: I started going to shows in '95 and they were mostly thrash metal shows. I originally started going because someone put a flyer in my junior high school. I went alone, decked out in a Pearl Jam shirt. The following night I brought a friend. I didn't miss a punk show in St. Johns until ten years later when I moved away.

Juls: Umm... can we talk about the shitty situation that occurred in St. Johns wherein an older hardcore dude was preying on an extremely young girl who had just started coming to shows? What was your involvement in the situation? Did you know the people?

Susan: I was good friends with both people involved, the young girl was and still is a very important part of the St. Johns punk scene. The man was in bands and had been around for as long as I was, we ran in the same circle. Looking back on the situation I wish I had grabbed him and said, "Stay the fuck away from her," but how can you assume that everyone is a predator?

It was a weird situation because I knew that they were hanging out, but I didn't put two and two together or really feel uncomfortable about it because I felt weird enough being 23 and hanging out with 14-year-olds as it was.

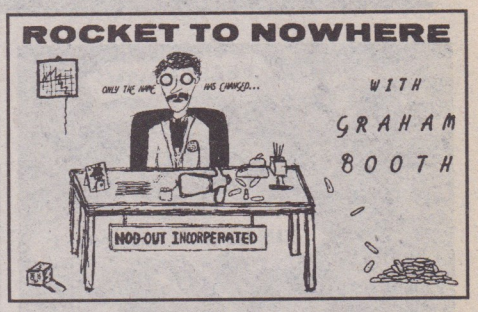
Juls: How old was she at the time?

Susan: At the time that I met her? Probably 13. I actually remember I saw her and this guy. She was 13 or 14. He was 24 or 25. Like if we had parties, we would invite these young kids we saw at shows every weekend. Majority of the kids were straightedge, so we didn't have to worry about them getting too drunk or anything of that business. I think that the difference between that happening in a small town compared to a big town, is that in a big town it probably wouldn't come out in the open. Nobody would pay attention or care. It's just that in a small town like St. Johns you have to constantly deal with your past mistakes. Like I don't think this guy goes to shows anymore or is involved, which is good. I just don't think it would come up in Toronto. I don't know. What do you think? Like with Vancouver?

Juls: Yeah... yeah, it would come up in Van-couver. I think.

Susan: I don't know. I don't what to say about it. I was in Toronto when the girl told me and my friend what had happened. We weren't surprised but we were upset by it. We both talked about it a lot on the phone and we decided to tell this man that we weren't going to be friends with him and why just so that there would be some kind of impact.

One of the most frustrating things that happens when abuse is outted (especially when its sexual) people start acting as judges, trying to figure out what is truth and what is not. People need to realize that it is not their responsibility to find the truth it is only their responsibility to support the victim. The only good thing that comes from these situations is that we learn how to deal with it the next time. 'Cause unfortunately there will be a next time.



Sick! It's January 2010 as I type. I can't think of a time I've ever been more excited about music! I'm happy to report that that brief moment of pleasure, dropping the needle on some unknown slab you brought home, doesn't ever seem to go away. If anything it seems to get better with age. Even though you think you've heard everything, there's always something new and different to up the ante. It's comforting to know that despite all of life's daily tribulations, you can always count on that simple pleasure to focus your attention and make all the bullshit go away.

That being said, for those of you out on the streets trying to find old records like me, it's pretty rough out there for 2010. When I started collecting fifteen years ago things were a lot different. Nobody knew *everything* about *every* record. It took years and years to assemble some semblance of knowledge. None of your friends cared or knew what you were talking about. You had to hook into this underground network of collectors around the world, through the mail and the early internet. You looked forward to any and every scrap of a want list or trade list, scouring fanzines and thanks lists on records for similar bands, slowly building an internal database in your mind. You could build as great a collection as anyone, it was all about how much time you put into it.

Nowadays, all of those disparate dots that collectors were connecting in the '80s and '90s (and '00s) are all out there up on the internet for anyone to use. It's amazing the amount of information available nowadays. New things appear every day as discographies are updated and sound files are added to music blogs. Bands that were largely unknown in the '90s are essential listening. I can still remember in 1995 hearing a raging NYHC band I'd never heard of on the *Sunday Matinee* LP compilation. I had no idea if they made a record, but I knew that it would destroy if they did, so I penciled their name onto my want list. A few months later I was holding an URBAN WASTE *Police Brutality* 7" EP in my hands! Does it get any better? Back then it took some convincing, and it was another year before I met anyone who'd ever heard of them.

Needless to say we became fast friends.

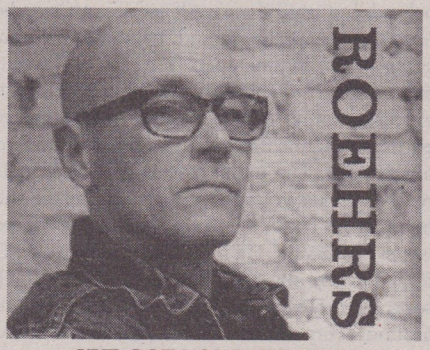
In 2010, URBAN WASTE might as well be AGNOSTIC FRONT, BUM KON or MECHT MENSCH are the new URBAN WASTE, and the only truly "obscure" bands left appear on forgotten mediocre compilation tapes from 1984 or 1985. I surprised myself, having just recently tracked down the SEX MUTANTS 7" EP from South Carolina which I only learned about this past year. It rips pretty ineptly for 1985, but URBAN WASTE it is not. And even SEX MUTANTS was a tough pull, virtually ungoogleable, taking several months to locate, and costing about twenty times what it would in 1995 (2005?) dollars. We are grasping folks.

Meanwhile, record stores have really fallen off in these past two years. With online resources at everyone's fingertips, fewer and fewer obscurities slip through the cracks and into the bins. The good stuff goes straight to eBay, or if you're lucky, up on the wall at the "popsike minus ten bucks" price for a couple weeks. I find myself constantly asking the same question, "Why bother leaving the house if I can buy it for the same price on eBay?" Even in the good stores, turnover has slowed down to a trickle. An hour spent at a store used to mean accumulating a small stack of stuff to buy, nowadays, you spend that same hour on a wild goose chase to find that *one* new record hidden on the floor that you're barely even interested in. Welcome to the era of the mercy buy.

I guess this all must sound like a lot of complaining? It's definitely a lot harder to find records since now everybody knows what everything is (worth), even people who could care less about it. But in some ways things are better nowadays, especially for newer collectors. You can hear pretty much any punk record you can think of at any time. No more depending on over hyped trade lists and "want list staple" status. It's a great way to weed out the things you don't care about so you can focus on tracking down those few things that really move you. The internet has also brought to light an innumerable amount of records that would otherwise be residing in landfills around the world. Commerce and records can be frustrating except when you consider that money is what brought most of these records to light in the first place. I've developed my own adventurous tastes simply through buying records for resale over the past ten years.

Whatever, I guess what I'm saying is that the game has changed. In '90s terms, collecting sure seems like a pain in the ass. But there are still crazy and seemingly obvious records being found every day for pennies on the dollar, just a lot less of them. Knowledge isn't what it used to be, and untouched stashes of records are few and far between. The new mode is serendipity: being at the right place at the right time. But you'll have to surrender any sense of entitlement and expect the worst; otherwise you're bound for disappointment. That and expand your horizons. Everybody's doing it. If nothing else you'll end up with a pile of records to sell to pay for the holy grail you could never otherwise afford, and you're bound to stumble onto something you'd never imagine yourself liking. And if you can really only handle punk records, step up your internet search game in 2010 because that's where most of the records are. Sure, some things continue to sell for record prices, but tons of great things slip under the radar every day. Get on it!

Now I'm off to do some internet research of my own. This past weekend I found a Glossy Filipino Music Magazine from 1979 at a flea market. It happens be the "punk / new wave" feature issue, sporting a cover shot of the B-52s, and DEVO on the back. Along with features on BLONDIE and the CLASH, there's a hilarious "Buyer's Guide" that attempts to explain how to tell the *real* stuff from the *fake* stuff. I'm always bummed how the POLICE get lumped in! But the most intriguing part was discussion of "fake" Filipino "punk" compilations on major labels featuring *original* tracks licensed from the artists, but performed by local studio musicians. To think there are Pinoy Rockers who churned out versions of DEVO or BLONDIE. Exploito Punk is one of my favorite genres of late, be it Spain's LOS PUNK ROCKERS, "China's" DRAGONS, or the post punk goodness of Canada's LONDON ROCKERS with their unique versions of GARY NUMAN, THE DICKIES and PIL. Hopefully I can track some of these Pinoy comps down for $20 (and not $200), and I'll report back at some point. Now cross your fingers and hope for some luck out there!



I'VE GOT YOUR NUMBER

The hardest Oi! band to come out of Boston in quite a while is HAMMER AND THE NAILS!! HAMMER AND THE NAILS has a brutal four song attack available as a demo on Rock'n'Roll Disgrace Records. The *Set To Ruin* CD has that fucking excellent rock and roll enthusiasm coursing through its veins. HAMMER AND THE NAILS starts the blood flowing with "Product of This Modern Age." Fuck! This shit is great! A favorable comparison could be made to LAST RESORT or COMBAT 84. Brilliant! Read some of the lyrics to "Product Of This Modern Age;" "He turned his back for a greater sin / Abandoned God and country / He defected to the other side / Now they claim unfair treatment of the lowest scum who deserves no better / He's a product of this modern age / What do we show mercy for? / String him up and let him die! / Lock him up and throw away the key / He was bereft of a parent's guidance / Free to explore the evil and absurd / Unknowing to his family and all of their ilk / Had to prove that he was a 'bad boy' / Found a loop-hole, a means of escaping the punishment doled out by the other side / Pleading as a victim—fundamentalist pawn / But no one forced him to take up arms… / String him up and let him die, or lock him up and throw away the key!" Yes! Strong lyrics to a fucking great Oi! song! Song two is equally stunning! HAMMER AND THE NAILS present "Dirty Cop." This fucker gives off sparks! Two great comparisons come to mind—the TEMPLARS and BONECRUSHER!! That's high praise! The lyrics to "Dirty Cop" make it very clear how HAMMER AND THE NAILS feel about the cops: "Out in the streets, it's your word against ours and you know who they're gonna believe / You're a dirty cop – shoot 'em in the back / Cold steel to the back of the head / You can simply take a life / Tamper with evidence—you're a dirty cop… / You're above the law / It only takes one rat to blow your cover / Then the scales are tipped / You're at the other end of the law / You're a dirty cop—shoot 'em in the back!!". Yes sir!!! "Dirty Cop" is a great song!!! Song number three is "Legislation, No Rehabilitation" with more finetuned Oi! Music. Read some of the bitter lyrics to this great skinhead rock: "Low life scum—friend to no one / Creeps about at night—waiting till the time is right / Now he strikes—with a perverts might, but she sees his face. Later, in a lineup she points him out / He's found guilty —does his time with no parole and his rehabilitation is just a joke / They make him register in every town he goes, but he's got his freedom and he will do it again / No enough enforcement—too many criminal rights! / His cycle of violence continues each and every night / Now it's on us—to apply more pressure / More legislation—to stop repeat offenders—or we'll take it in our own hands!!" Whoa! Those are intense lyrics!! The last song on the HAMMER AND THE NAILS demo CD is "Set To Ruin." This song kicks a whole truckload of skinhead butt! The hardened Oi! Music is accompanied by some deep thoughts. Read these succinct lyrics: "I don't know what I'm doing / My life is set to ruin / Got to settle down—break away—get away / I can take the pain, but not the stress / Weaker men have taken their lives for less / Why does everything have to be a test? / Well, I think I failed—but I gave my best!" This is a spectacular skinhead rock'n'roll demo! Contact HAMMER AND THE NAILS at: rnrdisgrace@gmail.com

Yes sir! Matt, the singer from DISCO ASSAULT has a great demo out now with his new Oi! band named BAD ASSETS. BAD ASSETS come out swinging with song number one, "Wasted Generation." This has great vocals supplied by Ralph D.I.C.! The shouted harmonies will remind some folks of the classic "GLC" era sound of England's MENACE. Song two on the BAD ASSETS demonstration CD is called "Factory Rat". The lyrics bemoan the life of the factory worker struggling "to make ends meet". Matt Assault lays down some first-rate guitar parts on "Factory Rat" and, along with Elbeau on bass and the "Notorious" A.L.I. on drums, this makes for a winning combination. Song number three by BAD ASSETS is "Wednesday Night Warrior" and this Oi! nugget carries on the strong skinhead rock perpetrated by this Canadian/USA skinhead outfit. To contact BAD ASSETS contact Matt at: 1279 Bruce

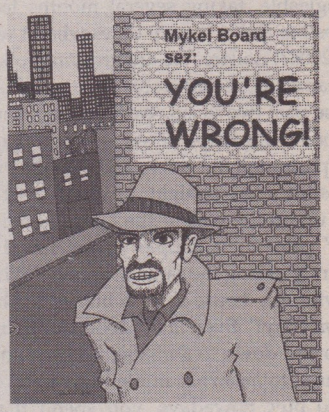
Ave., Windsor, ON, N8X 1X2, Canada, or in the US at: 12998 Arden, Livonia, Michigan 48154, USA.

Yes! Draw Blank Records in conjunction with Deep Six Records has released a hardcore record that might just destroy your little world! The new EP is by LOW THREAT PROFILE and the hardcore music delivered here is relentless! Andy of NO COMMENT sings, Matt of INFEST is on bass and guitar duties and Bob of LACK OF INTEREST plays drums. You get ten songs of take-no-prisoners style hardcore! The singing is maniacal shit—clearly possessed by another power!!! Guitars and drums punctuate the frantic explosion! You begin with "Kick My Heart," which is a lovely little song with lyrics such as: "You drain me—pull me under / Make me sink to an all time low / break me down." Those are reflections of a love gone bad! On song two the hardcore mayhem continues with more lyrics about a failed relationship with "Rebirth." This loud, fast number sings about: "Pick myself up and wipe off your shit / Enough has been swallowed / It's time for rebirth." Song three on side A features more brilliant hardcore with poignant lyrics. Read some of the very personal insights in "I'm Not Perfect:" "Point your finger—judgment passed / I'm not ashamed of the things that I have done / I'm not perfect and neither are you / Let's put your record on display and let me be the judge, jury and executioner." Yes! Anybody that's been in "love" can relate to those lyrics! Sad but true! We continue through "Corporate Cash Lies" about how large capitalist enterprise manipulates people. "Lessons In Cruelty" has some words of wisdom for you: "Sessions in bloodshed / Lessons of cruelty / Knowledge is power / Wisdom brings us release—a new way of thinking…" Fuck yes! This devastating hardcore record has great words to make you think! We surge on through to "Distance Yourself" with "No more facades—no more games." Next up is "Nobody Fears You" with lyrics illustrating a situation we all have gone through: "Huff and puff —nobody can see you bitch and moan / Nobody cares / Scream and shout—Nobody hears you / Punch and kick—nobody fears you / You spend most of your life trying to prove you're the man, but deep inside you know that you're a piece of shit—just a little fuck." Yes! Those lyrics will emasculate any tough guy poser that happens to cross into your world! We travel through "Southern Hospitality" and "Ripe" and arrive at "Product Number One." Some of the words are: "You've lost your ideals—where has your spirit gone? / You've become a king of an empire of wax / Actually you're just a sitting duck in your bedroom." Wow! Those are harsh comments for the major label money-grubbers! The last song is "The Well Seasoned Whore" with hateful lyrics that go like this: "Sat back from afar as I've watched you fuck me / Creative theft / Sucked dry / Crimes committed / You move on / You seasoned whore / You are a parasite!" That lyric contains a lot of bitterness – things did not end well! The music and the lyrics of this EP make it essential! Contact Draw Blank Records or Deep Six Records.

Fuck! HIGH LIFE from Flower Mound, Texas has a punishing new EP on the great Cowabunga label! The new HIGH LIFE EP is entitled *Self Abuse* and this fucker is rough and raw! HIGH LIFE embraces some of the downright nasty and vile messiness of fellow Texans ANS. This shit is loose and dangerous to your very being! HIGH LIFE crank up the imminent disaster with a speedy blast called "Constant Battles." Some of the words go like this: "Fueled by fire on horses we ride chasing dragons – leaving death behind this life is total war… / Dirty and strapped—tonight we ride—never gonna die!" Yes sir! Those are killer lyrics! The second song on the HIGH LIFE EP is the title cut, "Self Abuse." This punk rant is drenched in misery with imagery that could be auto-biographical. Read these dark lyrics: "Killing myself one day at a time / Can't love anyone else when I hate myself / It's about time to cut another line of paranoia—I'm shutting down / Self abuse." Ouch! Those are mighty unhappy reflections! The singer in HIGH LIFE agonizes over this life on Earth. The vocals are truly tormented shit! The guitar player has the occasional opportunity for a quizzical lead or two. Side B of the HIGH LIFE record offers more troubled men caught in a mire. Side B starts with "Nosedive" —check out some of these thoughts: "Over and over – nosedive – gripping tightly to anything that will scare the shit outta me / Waiting for the final toll / To leave this world behind, but until then we'll escape our minds—nosedive—trapped behind bars that I cannot grasp / Ripping me apart from the inside out—over and over—nosedive." Fuck! "Nosedive" expresses some of the frustration one feels as you participate in the futile struggle against the forces of life itself. The manic vocals that HIGH LIFE renders makes your skin crawl—makes the short hairs on your neck stand up erect! Some comparisons to NEVER HEALED are acceptable. The final song on the *Self Abuse* EP is "Lifted." This song celebrates more of the madness that lurks around every corner in this god-forsaken existence. Here are some of the more uplifting words: "We don't expect to win / We've got nothing to lose / When your future's as empty as your soul, there's nothing left to do… / There's a Hell I've gripped tightly in my head / Slowly they merge as they begin to split, driving me mad—I can't take this!" Fuck! This shit really gets under your skin! Contact Kenny, Eric, Craig, Kurt and Jurms at: 3401 Jameston Dr., Flower Mound, TX 75028, www.myspace.com/highlifetx

An excellent zine has come across the *MRR* threshold! *Zarata*, "a fanzine for kids like you and me" presents a top-notch selection of punk and Oi! articles and reviews. Igor, from the Basque Country—an old European nation without a state, located between Spain and France, has put together a great zine! The name *Zarata* means "noise" in the Basque language (Euskara). The zine features punk-rock, Oi!, skinhead movement, reggae and football (soccer). It is written in both Basque and Spanish. The politics of *Zarata* are left-wing and anti-facsist, but the zine concentrates primarily on music. *Zarata* started publishing in 2005 and one issue a year is the output. Issue number four documents the '80s beginning of the skinhead movement in the Basque Country. Past issues have featured in-depth articles and reviews about COCKSPARRER, COCKNEY REJECTS, ANGELIC UPSTARTS, SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS, SHAM 69, MENACE, THE 4-SKINS, THE BUSINESS, LAST RESORT, ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE, UK SUBS, RESISTANCE 77, MAJOR ACCIDENT, EDDIE AND THE HOTRODS, SLADE and much more! This zine is one of the best Oi! and skinhead rock zines to appear in a long time! Contact Igor at: kaskamotzak@hotmail.com

Until next month, see you fucks at the bar!



I'm all for complaining about a worm because it's an ugly dirty little thing. But I don't believe in complaining about it because it might be a snake. —Brad Crandall

It hurt worse than a cactus dildo. My Chanukah present from my sister. A new vacuum cleaner. Just what I need. Really. My old one lost a filter. Whenever I used it, it spewed offal into the air, filling my lungs with 30 year old dust bunnies. I'd cough for a week. Chronic bronchitis.

So my sister gets me this new thing. Dirt Devil, it's called. "Powerful enough to suck up the deepest dirt."

It takes me about fifteen minutes to put it together and attach the hose and other equipment. I need to try it out. I unzip and pulled out my own equipment. From previous experience, I know that the obvious grease and insert is not nearly as much fun as vacuum tea-baggin'. Yowsah!

It works better on the right testicle. The left one hangs lower anyway. Vacuum induced equality, I say.

I go to tinyurl.com/3someok and get ready. In a few minutes, I've risen to 45 degrees. Then, pump it up a final five more degrees. Insert that ball. Step on the switch.

Yow!!! Jesus fuckin' Christ! Holy shit, is that thing strong! It feels like my tongue has been sucked down into my scrotum! I won't be able to walk for a week.

Cramped, I fall over into the bed and examine the injury. It looks like a bruised prune. I don't think I'll be going anywhere today. I can barely move.

I reach over to the night table and drag off a half-read magazine. I'll just lie here and read while my body resets my internal organs.

Check it out: *The Utne Reader*, a liberal journal I've often quoted in this column... the January

2010 issue.

I turn to an article called *A Conspiracy of Hate*. It's a reprint from *Intelligence Report*, a Nazi-baiting publication of the Southern Poverty Law Center. I wrote about those guys before (*MRR* 317). They want right-wingers banned from the military because they're too violent. Makes a lot of sense... huh? Military people shouldn't be violent, should they?

The article in the new issue conflates all kinds of right wingers on the flimsiest of evidence. Militias are racist. Conspiracy theorists are Nazis. Gun owners are anti-Jewish. They all believe in the "Protocols of The Elders of Zion," a notorious middle-ages fake document on the Jewish plan to take over the world. Oy.

Check out this quote from a typical anti-militia lefty, "The militia movement today believes in the conspiracy theory of the *Protocols*, even if some call it something else and never mention the Jews..." Huh?

What pisses me off most about this article are the flimsy connections the *I.R.* uses to show a vast violent right-wing conspiracy. Want a connection between the tax protesters who want an end to the Federal Reserve and violent racism? Check out this quote:

"In March, a Spokane, Washington, man pleaded guilty to illegally possessing two grenade launchers, 54 grenades, 37 machine guns, eight silencers, and a variety of explosives. The man had an "End the Fed" bumper sticker on his vehicle."

That's right. He had a bumper sticker! That's the connection.

Jesus fuckin' Christ. I better watch my back, since who knows how many crimes are committed by people with BABY ON (Mykel) BOARD bumper stickers on their cars?

This rankles my dander so much I feel like canceling my *Utne* subscription. I sit up, but the pain in my groin knocks me back into a lying position. Good thing too. Because, unlike me at the moment, *Utne* has functioning balls. They follow this horrible article by a piece of brilliance from *Reason Magazine*, a publication of the US Libertarian Party.

The title of the article is "The Paranoid Center." It is so exactly right, that I'm tempted to reprint the whole thing, and call it my column. Unfortunately, it's too long (now *that's* a phrase I rarely hear!), and a bit too dry. So I'll abridge it some here. Those interested can get the complete article at: tinyurl.com/reason-paranoid.

I do want to quote the first few original paragraphs though, because they lead to the meat of the article.

"On June 10, 2009, an elderly man entered the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, raised a rifle, and opened fire, killing a security guard named Stephen Tyrone Johns. The killer was soon identified as James Wenneker von Brunn, an 88-year-old neo-Nazi. Von Brunn acted alone, but there was no shortage of voices eager to spread the blame for his crime. The murder was quickly linked, in a free-associative way, to the assassination tens days earlier of the Kansas abortionist, George Tiller. This, we were told, was a 'pattern' of 'rising right-wing violence.'"

"More imaginative pundits tried to tie the two slayings to a smattering of other crimes, from an April shootout in Pittsburgh that killed three cops, to a year-old double murder at a Knoxville Unitarian church. The longest such list, assembled by the liberal blogger Sara Robinson, included nine diverse incidents linked only by the fact that the criminals all hailed from one corner or another of the paranoid right. One of the episodes involved a mentally disturbed anti-Semite who had stalked a former classmate for two years before killing her in May. 'This is how terrorism begins,' Robinson warned."

After this, the article goes on about various ways that lefties and their friends manufacture conspiracies from picking unrelated facts and grinding them together like I grind cholesterol-lowering turmeric with my coffee beans every morning. OK, that's to be expected. The right-wing does the same with lefty "crimes."

A great band (mine) once wrote a song called *Crassdriver* about how the right and the left are pretty much the same. Both are totalitarian, and anti-sex. They're also both paranoid, seeing plots in every historical accident—like other paranoids see hidden threats in the pattern of sidewalk cracks.

So, say the lefties, the militias are a bunch of anti-Jewish (usually called *anti-Semitic*, but that term is as vague and misguided as *Asian*), fascist racists. Everybody knows that, right?

Not so fast. Robert H. Churchill, in a recent book about the militias says they are anti-government and anti-government inspired violence (Remember Waco?). They are not particularly anti-Black or anti-Jew. He backs up his interpretation with lots of quotes from militia figures. These include denunciations of the beating of Rodney King and the rape of Abner Louima, a Haitian man who New York police sodomized with a broomstick in 1997.

According to Churchill:

"The militias formed and grew as their members 'came to the conclusion that the federalization and militarization of law enforcement had created a paramilitary culture of violence.'"

In other words, the militias are like you and me! They're anti-government, especially anti-government violence against the helpless.

And what about the Timothy McVeigh-style militia's own violence... like the Oklahoma bombing? It's like the Unibomber bombing, and exactly as representative of the movement. In fact, in at least three cases, police arrested fringe militiamen after other militia members got wind of their violent plans and called the cops.

Even more parallel to the left, the older right-wingers didn't like the newer upstarts.

"They are not for the preservation of the white race," Aryan Nations chief Richard Butler complained. "They're actually traitors to the white race; they seek to integrate with blacks, Jews, and others."

Yeah, there are racists in the militias, *but even as bigots sometimes appeared in militia circles, so did blacks, Hispanics, and Jews.*

Ok, we can expect the left and right to mirror each other in paranoia and conspiracy theories. It's like two testicles, alternating on which hangs lower. But what of *The Center*? What's that got to do with them?

Well, *The Department of Homeland Security* (as paranoid center as you can get) issued a report about the dangers of the right. They said the right

...can be broadly divided into those groups, movements, and adherents that are primarily hate-oriented (based on hatred of particular religious, racial or ethnic groups), and those that are mainly anti-government, rejecting federal authority in favor of state or local authority, or rejecting government authority entirely. It may include groups and individuals that are dedicated to a single issue, such as opposition to abortion or immigration.

The report said nothing about any actual danger from these groups. Isn't that what *Homeland Security* is supposed to do? Talk about security? Not ideology.

Much to their credit, the ACLU protested the report. They said it focused on ideology rather than any real violence. That made it a danger to free speech and free thought.

Most of the mainstream ignores this logic. It sees the right-wing rhetoric itself as dangerous, just like the mainstream saw the rhetoric of the sixties leftists as dangerous. And it's the mainstream that has the most guns. It's up to us to have more (uninjured) balls.

Says Jesse Walker, the *Reason* article's author: *It's comforting to imagine that violence and paranoia belong only to the far left and right, and that we can protect ourselves from their effects by quarantining the extremists and vigilantly expelling anyone who seems to be bringing their ideas into the mainstream. But the center has its own varieties of violence and paranoia. And it's far more dangerous than anyone on the fringe, even the armed fringe, will ever be.*

Yeah the rightists are pests (although sometimes they're correct), but they're not all dangerous. And there is no vast conspiracy of militias and Klansman, any more than there's a vast conspiracy of university bombers and Barack Obama. My right ball still hurts like hell, but that doesn't mean there is a giant corporate plot to render me childless. Come on! Get a grip!

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to post comments on the column]

—>*Legalized Blackmail Dept: Website* magazine reports the establishment of a new website: BadCustomer.com

Here, a merchant can report a fussy, non-paying, chargeback customer. That customer then gets listed on the site, which is free for merchants to use. They can use the customer list to deny "bad customers" credit.

Customers, of course, have a way to remove their names from the list. Just fork over $100 to the website.

—>*What's good for the gander dept:* In the UK, a heterosexual couple have been refused permission to register for a civil partnership.

Tom Freeman and Katherine Doyle said they want to challenge "discriminatory" UK laws which restrict civil partnerships to same-sex couples. They plan legal action after their application was denied in London. UK law permits only heterosexual couples to marry. Same-sex couples can form civil partnerships.

Couples in a civil partnership have the right to the same legal treatment as a married couple—including inheritance, pension, life assurance and maintenance rights. However civil partnerships can only be conducted by registrars, not members of the clergy, and the partnership cannot legally be called a "marriage."

Freeman said: "It would be lovely to formalize our relationship but we are completely turned off by the whole institution of marriage because it discriminates against gay people."

He added: "We think gay people should be able to have a standard marriage and straight people should be able to have a civil partnership."

Local gay groups support the couple.

—>Palindrome *of the month dept:*
"Dennis and Edna dine," said I, as Enid and Edna sinned.

—>*Oxymoron of the month dept:* From The Internet Oxymoron List: *Religious tolerance.*

—>*It must be that part about rich people not getting into heaven dept:*
The Progressive reports that a group of US conservatives, led by Andy Schlafly, son of the rabid Phyllis Schlafly, has proposed a rewrite of the New Testament. They want to get rid of its "liberal bias." The idea is to amend the King James version of the bible to include more "free market parables" and "the logic of hell."
Wasn't it the right-wingers who complained when The Beatles said they were "more popular than Jesus?" Now look who's talking about rewriting The Bible. Bigger than Jesus, I'd say.

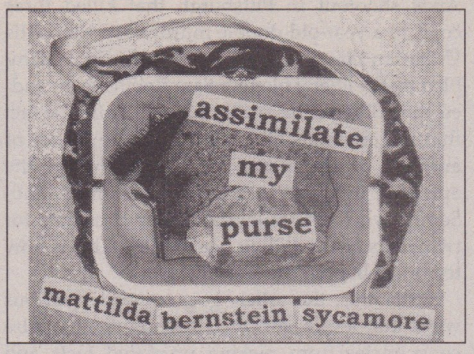
—> *Chainstore blues dept:* While my longtime curse against Starbucks worked in forcing the java-giant to close 200 stores, I didn't expect people to actually pick up the gun and march en mass. I guess I don't keep up with the news.
Green Anarchy newspaper (I forgot who sent me this. Kyle?) reports that in 2002, police found two bombs in Dutch outlets of IKEA. It looked like an anti-corporate chain protest.
Could you imagine the chaos of the likes of Walmart if an explosive device were to be found there? They'd have to install airport bomb detectors and make the whole shopping experience even more unpleasant than it already is. Not that I'm advocating anything like that. Who me? Never!

—>*My Kind of Terrorism dept:* In Santa Cruz California, artists spray painted 65 SUVs with slogans including "No Blood for Oil," and "SUVs Suck."

I can imagine a few more creative sprayings like "The bigger the car, the smaller the dick." Or "Stupid Ugly Vehicle." But it's a start. Not that I'm advocating anything like that. Who me? Never!

—>*My senility dept:* During my Albanian trip, I learned how to say *I want to kill you, you motherfucker* in Albanian: De të të vras o të qitsha nonën. I forgot to mention that last time. Email me for the details on how I happened to learn that phrase.

—>*Shame on you Obama dept:* The last website I want to talk about is probably the most important. It's ourbombs.com/striketracker. Check it out and see what that asshole in the Whitehouse is doing to the people of Afghani and Pakistan. For their own good, of course.



GETTING IN

Maybe we did smoke in the kitchen—I just keep picturing it. With the window open. I don't want to edit the past to make the future clearer, does anyone remember? Last night, in my endless quest to find somewhere to dance, I went to the bar right on the corner where we used to live, the bar that was originally a dyke bar, but by the time we'd arrived everyone just talked about how it used to be a dyke bar. We all hated that bar, but Camelia hated it more than the rest of us, because every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 2 a.m. the street would get super-loud with suburbanite screams and she had to get up at 5 to go to her job at the bagel shop, the place where they boiled the bagels instead of baking them, so they actually tasted like bagels.

I forgot that if you go to an electronic music show, everyone stands around just like at a rock show, stands around and doesn't move, staring at some cheesy art school antics by straight boys with fancy hair. Like, there's a film projected on a sheet and behind the sheet, they're making finger puppets and then the sheet pulls away and there they are, just like in 1967 or whatever, they're even wearing the same clothes. I was waiting for a moment when maybe something would change, like a DJ in between sets or something—there was pot smoke right away, but I was trying to pretend that the ventilation system was blowing it away from me, I could feel the fresh air coming down from the ceiling but then at one point I noticed something strange going on with the lights, maybe just steam because it was so hot, but then I looked closer at the ceiling, and sure enough, perched right above the stage was a fucking smoke machine. Rushing outside past to the weekend throngs on Valencia, this one blonde woman saying to another: he asked me where I lived, you must be from the Sunset—excuse me for looking good! And another, a straightboy with long curly hair so perfectly coiffed he must be a model, modeling this hair: so this chick says to me, are you a Leo or a Pisces?

Meanwhile I'm yelling what the fuck, what the fuck am I doing on Memory Motherfucking Lane? Or, OK, I'm not yelling, but I'm thinking about yelling.

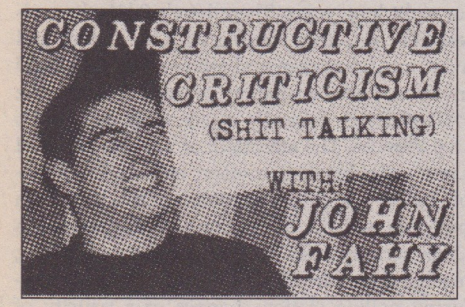
I went to Seattle to get away—for a month, anyway, to figure things out. My two biggest relationships were falling apart, and maybe also my relationship with the queer cultures that meant everything to me. But I need to tell you about JoAnne. We met at the March on Washington in 1993, right in Dupont Circle where the freaks would come up to one another we spotted each other among all the white t-shirts, but JoAnne and I really met at Caffe Paradiso when I arrived in Seattle and right away we were talking about sexual abuse and rape and crystal and everything us and how we were trying not to feel destroyed and maybe finally working. And then I spent a month in her room, we shared her bed and it never felt crowded. How could that be possible, that's what I'm wondering now, now when I can't sleep without everything arranged in the right way and then everything goes wrong anyway, but this was a different time.

I would go to Paradiso or the new café, Bauhaus, during the day and read *The Courage To Heal*, and then when JoAnne would get out of her phone sex job where she actually worked in an office with a bunch of other women and office dividers, eight dollars an hour I think and when she got out of work we would cook dinner or sometimes I would've already cooked, huge stir-fries with ginger and a homemade peanut sauce or if JoAnne was cooking then she used dill and cashews, and we both used tons of Braggs amino acids which were every vegan's wild dream at the time and there was this way that we held each other and we held each other's rage, that was the key, the key that made us us.

Seattle was totally different from San Francisco—it seemed like most people were actually from Seattle, or from somewhere in the general region. The whole city felt suburban—even the counterculture kids looked like they bought their clothes at the mall; there was even a counterculture mall with tiny stores that sold things like piercing needles and tattoos and I Can't Even Think Straight t-shirts. The apartment building where JoAnne lived looked like a suburban cul-de-sac with blue prefab townhome-style apartments arranged around a parking lot. In Seattle, people would get in blowout fights about which café served the best coffee—I'm not kidding. Even the neighborhood that white people were afraid of felt middle class. People would get dressed up to go to cafés, I mean like they were going to a club, especially goth kids with long layers of black touching the ground, or ravers with baggy jeans and bright-colored piercings, or goth ravers—these were kids who couldn't get into most clubs yet, since Seattle was strict about IDs. There were cafés that stayed open until 4am, and you could hang out all day and night without buying anything—that's because Seattle actually had a youth culture. A few times, JoAnne and I went to the Lambert House, the queer youth center, for dinner, and it was kind of astonishing the range of kids there—thirteen-year-old drag queens practicing runway; dykes with facial piercings who talked about running away, some of them had already done it and some of them were waiting; kids who would show up with bruises on their faces, covered up with makeup, and talk about all the clothes their parents were going to buy them. Once I saw this butch, clean-cut gay boy burst into tears because his parents were forcing him to join the mili-

tary—he already looked like he was in the military, until he started crying. His parents showed up in a big white station wagon and he got in.

The writing in this column is an excerpt from some crazy memoirish thing I'm working on called *The End of San Francisco*. My most recent book is a novel, *So Many Ways to Sleep Badly*. I'm also turning lostmissing, my public art project, into some kind of book-type thing, yay for more books! And I recently finished a new anthology called *Why Are Faggots So Afraid of Faggots?* I know you're wondering the same thing. You can communicate with me via www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.



THE SHAME AND HUMILIATION OF AMERICAN BANDS TOURING EUROPE

I've gotten word recently that one of the bands I'm in, Merkit, may return to Europe this summer, so I've been thinking of nothing else. When we went the first time, we toured with another band who'd toured the mainland many times and we only had nine days, eight shows; four shows in Germany, one in France, two in Italy, and another in Austria. The drives were long and hellish, but of course the view was always amazing; everything was weird and beautiful. That sums up Europe pretty well in general. I should start at the beginning, I guess.

We showed up at the Pisa airport after our seven hour flight over from the US, freaking out about customs finding and taxing the records we'd planned to sell. We made it through unchecked and unmolested, and met our Italian escort, Iacopo. Iacopo had set up all eight shows for both of our bands. He seemed totally unphased to be meeting six people he'd be cooped up in a van with for nine days and casually responded to our overly warm greetings. He actually turned out to be an amazing ally, and undeservedly generous to us. What I mistook for coldness ended up being just Italian laid-back coolness.

Iacopo had set us up with a huge van with a GPS up front so we could discern our ass from our elbow while driving. All amps and drums were provided by Iacopo also—we only had to bring guitars. He even made sure all bookings were providing us with a place to stay, as well as at least one—usually two—vegan meals per day. Iacopo did not or could not drive himself, so he was providing us with a driver also. Pretty fucking grand.

The first show we are playing that very evening is in a squat a few hours from Pisa. The building is covered in graffiti and Euro-punks are milling about. One bummer about meeting some Euro-punks is that the, "Hey I like No Comment too" conversation is much shorter with someone whose primary language is not the same as yours. Pointing at patches and giving the thumbs-up is about all you can do. We walk around and talk among ourselves in English, trying to figure out what this graffiti-ridden building had once been. I guess that it was something like a kindergarten; it has that look. I'm shot down by my bandmates when we discover some dormitory-type wing of the building. Odd.

We go on shuffling around for a while and some bands begin to play. Some are very good. I curse myself for not having enough money to buy records. We play after a while, and we are certainly not as "atmospheric" as some of the other bands playing and so I wonder what the hell the audience thinks of us. We are provided with food afterward, which we lash into. Everything is fresh—no need for any bullshit organic labels, this shit is from down the road. Where the food is being served there is also a small bar. I am told that since I am in one of the bands, I am entitled to three beers for free. I'm later to find out that this is standard fare throughout Europe. Killer.

The show ends and we are getting ready to set up our sleeping bags on the floor of the place. Kids running the venue are locking us in for the night. We ask why this is happening (I'm a little alarmed. I don't want some drunk diarrhea punk knocking over some goddamn lantern and burning the fucking place down with my dumb tourist ass inside it.) and find out what our shelter formerly had been used for. The building had been built by the Italian Communist Youth League and had served as a kind of headquarters/activity center. A fire had one time destroyed the place (diarrhea punks, maybe?) and had been abandoned. The punks, of course, cleaned it up, repaired and re-claimed it. We were being locked in for the night because the punks were on guard; alarmed at rumors the communists would take it back. This was my intro to Europe. I was impressed. We would come to find that almost every venue we would play throughout our time there had either been built or donated by decent people who wanted other people to have a good time, or stolen and squatted by punks. Righteous.

We show up the next day at a town called Bergamo. We are going to be playing a fest in a field. The field is so out-in-the-fucking-middle-of-nowhere that a scout must come into the town and lead us out to the place. The field is the exact same size as all the other corn fields surrounding it, but there are no crops, just grass and dirt. A large stage is set up and beside it, rows of tables for bands to set up merch. On the other side, more rows of tables are set up, providing food and drinks. We see the beer truck arrive and we are told by our hosts of the day that at the fest last year the beer had run out at midnight—1200 beers. So this time, they have purchased 2000. We are also told that all beer is free to us. Fuck. Iacopo tells us we will probably be playing to 500 people that night. The fest is kind of a hybrid of a DIY thing and a local celebration. In the middle of one band's set, the local soccer team—fresh from a championship win—storm the stage and stop the band playing to hoist up their trophy and show all of the locals. People, accordingly, go apeshit. Bandmates Nevin, Chris and I realize we have some pre-set nerves and need to shit them out pronto. No outdoor toilets here, only sweet, sweet nature to shit on. This becomes quite an ordeal.

Nevin drops trou and leans up against a tree no problem, drops dumpage, wipes with corn-leaf, and gets on with his life. Chris and I are stupid fucking indoor kids and don't shit outdoors often. Chris goes to squat somewhere. I wander around looking for a good spot. I don't want some ticks jumping up on my naked asshole while I poop—which Chris is just inviting—so I look for a tree to mimic Nevin's professionalism. I end up wandering too close to Chris. He scolds me, "Don't come over *here*!" I find a tree, drop trou, but am nervous about not being in enough of a "seat" position and being too much in a standing position—I don't want to drop a fucking turd right into the pants around my ankles, that would negate the point of the whole exercise. I get the job done with clean pants intact. I find some corn leaves and wipe. Horrible. One side of the leaf is too cool and smooth, and the other is like stringy fucking sandpaper. As much as I tried not to wipe up without getting poopy-handed, I failed. I walk back to the fest-field with my hand a mile in front of me, knowing it has some nefarious fucking shit on it. I have no means to clean this hand and it is now time for Merkit to play. I grab a beer (free) and douse my hand in it and rub it in the dirt, hoping beer and dirt will ironically, clean my hand. Bandmate Joe calls to me while setting up onstage to ask me if I'm ready to go. Amazingly, he doesn't ask me what I'm doing on the ground with the beer and the dirt. I smell my hand and am satisfied that the worst is over.

We play and it is pretty insane, by far the most people we ever played to, maybe ever will. Afterward, I intend to make the most of this free beer situation. Our driver is supposed to be meeting us at this show to take us to France the next day, a twelve hour drive, so I know I can sleep in the van no problem. I meet a lovely woman who used to be in some bizarre band with all kinds of weird instruments and CRASS-like verbiage. She is cool as fuck and explains to me what food is vegan or not. Her English is really quite good, so she makes everything easy on me communication-wise. Her boyfriend, she and I have a long talk about Italian horror movies and directors like Lucio Fulci and I am having a blast. The lovely woman tells me there is going to be a DJ playing some stuff from the SMITHS after the bands are done playing, followed by much dance music. Keep in mind, the live music part of the show is ending at like three in the fucking morning, DJ to follow that. This was another thing I was to find throughout touring Europe—*these people do not fucking sleep*. They prefer to dance. There is always a goddamn DJ on-hand. The variety of shit that they play is astounding. The requisite euro-techno shit is

there, sure. But then they'll bust out some fucking ABBA, or something from the fucking *Grease* soundtrack. Bizarre.

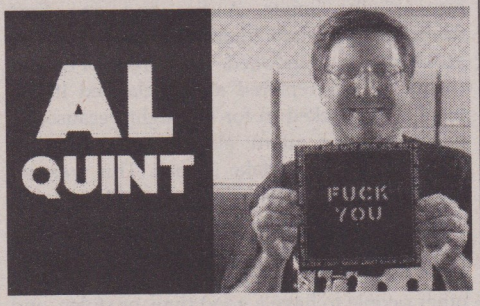
I am well into the free beer at this stage, of course, so I am ready to make a fucking fool of myself through the expression of dance. Bandmates are feeling it too, and before you know it we're all being stupid as fuck—dancing in a cornfield in Italy. Even Iacopo gets mental for a bit. Bandmate Nevin is delivered some awful news in the midst of our embarrassing behavior—our driver has cancelled for the entire tour, he has had some kind of emergency. Nevin is horrified, realizing he is the only one who can drive stick, we have to leave in a few hours and he's a bit drunk. He tries to sleep on the dewy ground behind a speaker the size of a goddamn ice cream truck that is blasting techno at 5 a.m. Everyone is taking this situation much more serious than I, because I am somewhat beyond seriousness. I beg Chris to continue dancing with me and he tells me to get up on a merch table and dance. I tell him no, that it would be embarrassing. He reminds me that I goaded him into swimming through an irrigation tunnel outside one of the cornfields earlier in the day and he nearly got stuck and drowned (Everyone told Chris this was a bad idea except for me. Our Italian friends and everyone in the two bands thought it was dangerous but Chris wanted to do it and I thought it would be cool. Nevin pulled him out as he got stuck and disaster was averted. Everyone cheered when he came out the other side. So I guess it was cool, but still a bad idea.). I accept that he is right and get up on the table and do that hump-dance thing that one guy does in the movie *Hot Rod*. The table collapses under the weight of my stupidity and embarrassment and somehow I manage to step off of it mid-disaster, acting like it had nothing to do with my antics on it.

As Nevin sleeps, Joe reminds me that we need to go soon. I have now changed drinks as the beer has amazingly, once again run out. I am now drinking some crazy local wine that is delicious. It's not free, but I happily give over my Euros in exchange for it. Joe keeps telling me we have to go while I continue on my warpath of idiocy. The sun has now come up, people are still dancing, and Joe runs over to me, mid-purchase of another glass of wine and takes the money out of my hand and tells me we need to go. I pick him up and hold him in some weird position and run through the crowd of dancing lunatics at full speed, knocking into everyone. We climb into the van and I take the very back seat, which has so much band equipment on it that only one person can sit there. I drift off and black out. Apparently, a few minutes into Nevin's oncoming nightmare of a drive, I begin piping up from the back that I need to get out. People begin mumbling among themselves about my condition. "He says he needs to get out." "What?" "I think he's gonna puke." "Fahy, are you gonna puke?" Chris asks me. I tell him that I'm not, but that I will puke on his dick. Nevin pulls over on a suburban street. I get out of the van and walk all of the way around it. Twice. I ask someone, "Where am I?" Nevin tells me that I am in Italy. I ask him, "Well, where do I go?" He tells me to puke on some nice people's lawn nearby. I take a huge piss and get back in the van. I sleep all twelve hours to France, causing Nev to have someone check on me to see if I'm dead or dying mid-journey.

To Be Continued...

ENDNOTES:

1. Stumbled upon a great Irish band called Drainland. Brings to mind Bovine Records fare; weird, ugly, unsettling hardcore. Brilliant. They should have a split 10" with the equally excellent Grinding Halt of Holland. Be sure to check them out. Their myspace is: myspace.com/drainland-dublin
2. Once again, be sure to get the Waking Up Hurts tape from WTFHTT? Records. Chilling stuff from Nick Klimczack, playing all instruments. Joe should have sounds files up here: www.flwebwizzard.com/wtfhttrecords
3. Send me a mixtape or your ugly hardcore band's demo: John Fahy/15011 Lakeside View Dr./ Apt 2402/ Fort Myers/ FL /33919. Or: fahy_john@hotmail.com
4. PANZRAM demos are still available from me at the above addresses for five bucks each ppd. We are working on a 10" and 7" right now, more on that later.
5. For more Euro goodies, check out pro-pooper Nevin's IFB Records Distro page; www.ifbrecords.com He's going to have the new Resurrection LP he's co-released and it will be absolutely destructive. Nevin also trades with some of the best European labels so you can get most of that stuff there, along with many used record gems.
6. Rational Animals have another record out on Feral Kid and you should get it, like I just did. xferal_kidx@yahoo.com.



IT'S THE END OF A FUCKED-UP DECADE...

"... there's another one coming—OH SHIT!"—with apologies (A-POLO-GY!!) to EMBRACE. Do any of you even remember EMBRACE? Ian MacKaye's band between MINOR THREAT and FUGAZI—I'm not including EGG HUNT. I'm borrowing from their song "End Of A Year,"" which is usually played at the end of my final radio show of the year but I decided to go for the more upbeat-sounding "New Year" by SVT this year—a Bay Area power-pop band from the late '70s/early '80s who included the JEFFERSON AIRPLANE's Jack Casady in its ranks, believe it or not. Jack was once rumored to have had his omnipresent headband tattooed onto his forehead, but I think that might have been a bit of smart-alecky rock writer whimsy. Actually, if you listen closely to the lyrics of "New Year,"" they're not that happy-sounding: "Every year's still the same/People come but they don't change/Try to make money in this world/You'd better bend over for executive rule/Get ready to bring in the New Year..." Still, it's a snappier melody than EMBRACE's song.

So, yeah, the decade is over. Well, technically it ends 12/31/10 but that's only brought up by insufferably smarty-pants people and they can be easily ignored. Was it fucked-up? Fucking right it was... let us count the ways, very briefly, because I want to move on to the musical focus of the column. It starts right away with Bush stealing the election (with the help of the Supreme Court) in 2000 and one of the worst presidencies in the history of the country was inflicted on the country for eight long years. Then there's 9/11, the endless War on Terror, starting with the "shock and awe" in Afghanistan and followed by the illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq. There's the PATRIOT Act, basically eviscerating everyone's civil liberties. The aftermath of 9/11 also created a new era of hyper-patriotism, nationalism, xenophobia, et al and that continues to this day. Bush probably stole the '04 election as well, this time in Ohio, accomplished by shenanigans with voting machines and the like. That entailed having confusing polling station changes or a paucity of machines in urban areas i.e. localities that would be more likely to vote Democratic. Finally, in '08, after one of the ugliest presidential campaigns in history, rife with brazen racism and ridiculous scare tactics, Barack Obama was elected, the first African-American president. And he proceeds to surround himself with Republicans and neo-liberal retreads from the Clinton administration. Instead of troop withdrawals, there's going to be a surge in Afghanistan. The "health reform" bill is watered-down to the point where it's only going to benefit insurance companies, and yet the conservatives still scream about socialism. Not too impressive a start, although I had pretty low expectations. I expressed a little optimism in the column I wrote for the January '09 issue but that's been blunted quite a bit.

From a personal standpoint, the decade kind of sucked, too—Ellen and I lost one of our closest friends on 9/11. My dad suffered a stroke in '02 and died a year and a half later. My Uncle George died last year. Employment insecurity. A health scare or two—I found out I have a mild form of epilepsy, but haven't had a seizure in four years. Our house got flooded. But, on the plus side, I'm still married to the best woman in the world, made some lasting friendships in recent years and have a radio show that will be nearly ten years old when you read this. Plus, I've been writing for this publication for half a decade and still have a zine going, albeit in an on-line incarnation these days. I'm less willing to suffer fools, but also think I'm better at picking my fights. With age comes wisdom? Probably not but that won't stop me from trying to at least put up a good front of *having* any sort of wisdom.

But I'm more than ready to move on to the '10s and whatever that will bring... "they say things will get better/All I know is... *they fucking better*!" Thank you BLACK FLAG, for your *Damaged* album that has gotten me through some

trying times over the years.

That brings us to the musical retrospective for the '00s. A few issues ago, *MRR* staffers and columnists contributed their "best of" lists but, somehow, I wasn't included. I don't know if I missed a message about it, it was an oversight on the part of the powers-that-be or a blatant snubbing (I *doubt* that, right guys/gals?) but, two months later, here's mine. I've spent the last couple of weeks going through records and CDs, trying to put together both a radio show and this list to feature the best of the decade. For the show, it's going to boil down to a combination of favorite overall releases, as well as individual stand-out songs, including songs that people might have missed because they were on otherwise unremarkable or good-but-not great/next level albums. I thought it'd be more interesting to write about those songs and also include the obligatory lists. I've selected ten of them, as a sampling, because I could be here all day if that list was expanded.

I've always been something of an obsessive about creating end of year lists, going back to my adolescent years, when I'd do countdowns, Casey Kasem style, on an imaginary radio show. And that's all you need to know about that before I reveal even more embarrassing highlights/lowlights from my younger years.

TEN GREAT SONGS FROM THE '00S YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED (not in any particular order)

1. FULL SPEED AHEAD – "Overload" (recorded in 2000, released a few years later on their *Born To Lose* album) Talk about careening... this song is bursting at the seams with unbridled energy and a great tag-line: I'm about to overload... I'm going to fucking *explode*!""

2. CRUCIAL UNIT – "Let's Unite The Punx and Skinz, Put 'em On A Boat, Send 'em Off To Sea and Sink Those Fuckers" (from their s/t (?) EP 2000). I'm not a grindcore fan and this song does have that element but it also has a hilarious oi-oi-oi-oi chorus to melt the heart of any true punk. That's why it's here.

3. READ YELLOW – "Read Yellow" (from both their self-titled, 2003 EP) These MassHoles were capable of creating a heady ruckus, guitar lines clambering over each other, anchored in place with pounding drums. Not easily classified as punk or hardcore but there's a reliance on volume and in-your-face intensity to make it memorable. This track lurches like a motherfucker on the main riff and has a dynamically eruptive bridge.

4. R'N'R – "What's Your Damage?" (from the *Stab To Kill* compilation, released 2003). Another batch of Massachusetts miscreants. The A-side of their first 7", "I've Had It," is about as good, but their full-length album was so-so. This track, tucked on a compilation CD, is the one to seek out. Only a bit over a minute but it's a searing mid-tempo rocker—the name R'N'R was fitting but not in any sort of cheesy way. "What's Your Damage" is punctuated by Joe Shumsky's screamy vocal, along with music's mighty force and it results in a memorable pounder.

5. LOST SOUNDS – "Don't Turn Around" (from *Black-Wave*, 2001). One of Jay Reatard's gazillion projects, LOST SOUNDS put out a number of releases. In this band, he teamed up with Alicia Trout, whose icily expressive vocal combines with the dramatic, dark wave/goth/whatever-you-want-to-call-it arrangement to create an incredible song. The jarring keyboard and guitar gnash take the song to a powerful climax before fading off into static.

6. KNOCK DOWN – "What's Left" (from their 2001 self-titled 7""). Tough-sounding, youth-crewish bands are a dime a dozen. This song, though, makes me want to pound the floor (as opposed to 86 MENTALITY, where the intro to their first 7" makes me want to punch myself in the face). It starts with the big buildup, a great pick slide setting the ominous tone and then comes the speed. After about 50 seconds, it comes to an abrupt halt. Sure, it could go on longer but sometimes it's not a bad thing to be left begging for more.

7. HEX DISPENSERS – "Down In The Park" (from their 2007 self-titled album). Dense-sounding drill-press garage-style rock and this cover of the GARY NUMAN song, stripped to its core and mightily revved-up, is one of the best cover versions of the decade. Maybe *the* best. Hard to believe it was only two guitars and drums (they added a bass-player later on) making this full-sounding heady racket.

8. BLOWFLY – "I Wanna Be Fellated" (from *Blowfly's Punk Rock Party*, 2006). Another cover version—well, sort of. Sometimes, you want a cheap, childish laugh. This provides one and then some. Porn hero Blowfly parodies a number of punk "classics," changing around the titles and words quite a bit. Most of 'em fall kind of flat but the first time I heard his version of this song (I'm sure you can guess who did the original), I couldn't stop laughing for like ten minutes—it was uncontrollable, teary-eyed, rib-hurting laughter and it happened on more than one occasion. I don't think I'd laughed that hard since the "suck my balls" scene in the *South Park* movie. Come on everyone, sing along: "blow blow blow blow/blow blow blow blow/I wanna be fellated!"

9. SOVIETTES – "Bottom's Up, Bottomed Out" (from *The Soviettes LP*, 2003). This Minneapolis quartet (three ladies/one gentleman) made some solid music over the course of their three albums but this one is absolutely killer. Knockout poppy punk and if the hook in the chorus doesn't get you, the ringing guitar signature towards the end definitely will.

10. CHOP-SAKIS – "Shoot To Kill" (from *Ghost Town Crowd*, 2002). Jeff from the MARKED MEN played drums in this Denton, TX band and "Shoot To Kill" is rough 'n surging garage/punk/pop perfection. Whew. The rest of the album has its moments but this one really stands out.

AND NOW, THE BEST RECORDS OF THE DECADE* (somewhat in order but still subject to arbitrariness and capriciousness)

LPs/12"/CDs

VIOLENT MINDS – *Eyes of Death*
DIRECT CONTROL – *You're Controlled*
DOUBLE NEGATIVE – *The Wonderful and Frightening World of...*
LAST IN LINE – *L'esercito Del Morto*
EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – *s/t* and *Primary Colours*
SKITKIDS – *Onna For Pleasure*
BORN DEAD ICONS – *Salvation On The Knees*
FUCKED UP – *Epics In Minutes* (OK, this might be cheating since it's a comp of their singles but too bad)
OUT COLD – Will Attack If Provoked
REPOS – *s/t, Hearts and Heads Explode, Ending On A Positive Note*
(Bubbling under: TOTALITÄÄR – *Vi ÄÄr Eliten*, BLACK SS – *Terror Of The Northeast*, BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE – *Strangled By The System*, TERMINAL STATE – *Your Rules*, TOTAL ABUSE – *s/t*, PUNCH IN THE FACE – *At War With Everybody*, CUT THE SHIT – *Harmed and Dangerous*, IKARA COLT – *Chat and Business*, CAREER SUICIDE – *Anthology Of Releases 2001-2003*, LIMP WRIST – *Thee Official Limp Wrist Discography* (more cheating with the last two)

7"S

AMDI PETERSENS ARME – *s/t* and *Blod Ser Mere Virkeligt Ud Påå Film*
FUCKED UP – *Police*
DIRECT CONTROL – *Religious Rampage*
NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE – *Claustrophobic* and *Mindless Violence*
GOUKA – *Chaos*
DEAD STOP – *s/t*
86 MENTALITY – *Goin' Nowhere Fast*
ACID REFLUX – *s/t*
SEX/VID – *s/t* and *Tania*
THE PROWL – *What Are You Doing?*
(Bubbling under: SHITTY LIMITS – *Here Are the Limits*, PUNCH IN THE FACE – *Dumb Hardcore EP*, BOTTLES & SKULLS – *I Am One, He Is No One*, SNOBS – *Control*, CUT THE SHIT – *Bored To Death*, REGRESS – *The Price Of Power*, NAZTI SKINZ – *Sic Semper Tyrannis* and many more I'm forgetting, no doubt...
(* I suppose you could say it's the best of '00 to '08 since there aren't any 2009 entries—if pressed, WASTED TIME's *Futility* and DESTINO FINAL's *Atrapados* would be the most likely candidates, as well as the PISSCHRIST/FRAMTID split 7". Truth be told, while there were some solid releases, I think it's necessary to wait and see how well they hold up over a year or two...)

BEST LIVE BANDS

AMDI PETERSENS ARME, SKITKIDS, LOOK BACK AND LAUGH, DSB, DEATHREAT, OUT COLD, TOTAL FURY, TEAR IT UP, SPAZM-151, 9 SHOCKS TERROR, REPOS, GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, LAST IN LINE, SYSTEMATIC DEATH, CUT THE SHIT, CAREER SUICIDE, DIRECT CONTROL, NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, VITAMIN X, TOTAL ABUSE, BRAIN HANDLE, FUCKED UP...

If you want to see my Best of 2009 list, as well as tons of record reviews and other incendiary musical opinions, go to subvox.blogspot.com. If you want to hear the Best of the '00s radio show, it'll be on the show's archive (1/4/10 show) at sonicoverload.blogspot.com. Happy New Year/Decade...

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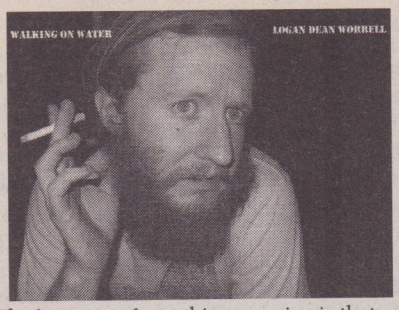


The best part about this magazine is that anyone can submit anything they want and more than likely it will run. People can talk about what they like about punk, what they hate about punk, and an open dialogue can be forged. *MRR* has turned people on to shit and turned people off from shit. Basically, it gives people a chance to air their opinions and others a chance to take them or leave them. That being said, isn't punk about doing what you want and saying what you want and not giving a fuck what other people think about it? Some of us came from money, went to college, and have nice jobs sitting in offices, leaving plenty of time to fire one out on various message boards about god knows what. Others came from different backgrounds, didn't do the whole school thing, and still work bullshit food service jobs. They are both fine. There's nothing wrong with either. The phrase "different strokes for different folks" comes to mind. It's all good, as the kids say. Some aren't as smart as others. Some don't dress like the others. Like different styles of music, etc. It doesn't matter. What does matter is that we all share a love for DIY and more or less share the same basic ethics. No racism, no sexism, no homophobia. I think careerists are full of shit. That's fine, it's my opinion. I think Christians are dumb. Also my opinion. Not the magazine's, mine. I like being able to say what I want. It's nice to have a place where everybody's voices can be heard. It's amazing that people can read what I write, think I'm a total fucking moron and write the magazine telling the world their opinion. *MRR* is a great thing and this fucking miserable world is a little bit better because it exists. You think *Pitchfork Media* would do this? Hell no. They don't give a shit. They get paid regardless. We don't get paid. Poverty keeps you honest. I mean, Brace and I get paid, but only because we are really fucking good.

By the time this column comes out, it will be 2010. It was a pretty shitty year, as I'm sure most of you readers would agree. There've been a few tours and few new ex-girlfriends. Still got the same job, more or less, and was able to hang out with a bunch of solid homies I don't usually get to see. Not being one for conspiracy theories, it's been on my mind for a while what a person such as myself would do if a whole 2012 thing was going down. Me and a friend saw the piece of shit movie of the same name and it blew my fucking my mind what people are willing do to save themselves from the sweet caress of death. I like the thought of just sitting back, putting on a Jerry Jeff record, lighting a smoke and relaxing on the roof, lawn-chair style, waiting for the big wave to fuck my shit up. Fuck running around like an asshole trying to live. Living sucks anyway. The only thing 2009 taught me is that I'm still a scared little kid who has no idea what the next step is.

So many good bands in Texas right now. The upcoming Deskonocidos LP is gonna change fucking minds. Shit is so good. It's like if Lords of the New Church and Paralisis Permanente had a baby with Eskorbuto. It's gonna be the record of 2010 and y'all better get into that shit. Eddie from BSA and VAASKA and a bunch of other Austin hotshots got a new band that's about to start playing, which I'm sure is gonna be amazing. Female vocal driven d-beat, with, from what I hear, a little bit of Finnish punk influence. New Years was a sad one for the punks down in the valley with the loss of Porkeria bass player Crack, who passed away after a car accident. He will be missed. Heaven for the climate, hell for the company. Also, local stoner rock band The Roller has been making some serious headway down in these parts with their long hair and brutal beards. All of them are some handy motherfuckers to boot. I also heard about this new group down here called You People who I really wanna see, though I'm rarely in town and they don't play too often. Chaos in Tejas is coming up again. Here comes another long fucking weekend complete with punks on a boat. I got an inside source that told me Lady Gaga and Broken Bones are gonna do a split set. Highlight for this year.... let's just say it starts with a GA and ends with a UZE. Maybe I'm lying, but maybe I'm not.

In closing, *Terminal Escape* is the best music blog on the planet. Finally, a music download source that is relevant and not just a way to get free music. A lot of the tapes are from Dick Lucas' personal demo tape collection. Many of the bands wouldn't ever have a chance to see the light of day otherwise. A great way to get turned onto new shit without putting small record stores out of business.

Send bullshit to ldworrell@gmail.com.

What an incredibly fucked up, crazed and hysterical country we live in.

I'm not referring here to the latest, unsuccessful attempt by a young Nigerian man to blow up himself and an American airplane just as it landed in the US on Christmas. He was a kid, really, who zealously tried to follow an extreme Islamic religious sect the dictates of which he barely understood. He's now being called the crotch bomber, underpants terrorist, and the like.

Mykel Board, eat your heart out.

The panic-stricken aftermath of this failed incident certainly reveals the eagerness with which Americans are willing to throw away their personal freedom and privacy for the Big Brother security state they ordinarily eschew with such vehemence. So long as they're safe. A few more such failures, with the attendant public frenzy, and the Constitution will have been effectively suspended. That's not my subject this column, however.

What caught my attention was an under reported story from November, 2009, that Santa Claus had finally been exposed as a child molester.

Well, not Santa himself. One of the volunteers who answered letters addressed to Santa at the "North Pole" turned out to be a registered sex offender. At first, the US Postal Service decided to cancel the whole "Dear Santa" operation. Then, the USPS reversed itself and resumed the program, with increased security to screen out the perverts.

This is a nation of goddamned idiots.

I'm not talking here about those rabid fundamentalist Christians who sanctify the embryo in the womb as human life, yet who insist that "to spare the rod is to hate the child." These wingnuts demand that mommy and daddy be permitted, no, encouraged to beat their kids for the slightest infraction.

Instead, I'm talking about the normal members of society who put warning notices on music, videos, films, websites and just about everything else, yet who insist that teens and preteens be tried as adults for their crimes and who have no problem seeing kids on death row. I mean, if children are these incredible innocents who must be assiduously protected from an evil world, then why hold them responsible when that world succeeds in ultimately corrupting them?

It makes no sense.

Adults go to incredible lengths to control children, under the guise of watching over them. They institute dress codes in school so that kids are not allowed to see clothing with dubious messages, let alone gang attire. They use schools and cops to monitor and prosecute kids for what they say over their phones or post on the internet. They've even resorted to microchipping their own progeny, in order to track them, as an excuse to keep them safe. These same adults bewail the fact that, ultimately, technological progress thwarts them at every turn. Or, at least, it runs one step ahead of their efforts to keep the kids in line. Given that youngsters frequently know far more about everything software related, is it any wonder that they can run circles around their parents with respect to "parental controls" on their computers? Sexting and beatdowns are regular features of modern adolescent communication, all powered by iPhone 3G technology. And, you want to bet that somebody, somewhere is working out a clever hack to circumvent those pesky RFID chips, even as you read this?

Don't get me wrong. I could spend column after column eviscerating fundamentalist yahoos, as when Lawrence O'Donnell ripped

Patrick Buchanan, and his fellow über Catholic morons, a new asshole for supporting the Pope's condemnation of abortion, while conveniently ignoring the Catholic Church's equally strong denunciation of the death penalty. And I could spend endless column inches condemning the absurdity of the mainstream imbeciles who legislate that sex offenders can't live anywhere near schools, parks and churches, and who then wonder why there are so many pedophiles living on the streets in major urban areas. The lunacy of my fellow citizens is endless, and endlessly amusing, yet this is about the kids.

It's all about the kids.

Gregory Bateson took on one of the most famous behaviorists of his day, B.F. Skinner, for raising his kid in his notorious Skinner Box. Skinner's premise was simple. Raise a child in a box so that you can control all the kid's environmental inputs. Control those inputs and you control the final output, the nature and character, the thinking and action of the human being that emerges from that box. Bateson argued that this was impossible. The human brain, and by extension the human mind, is a black box. You can control the information that goes into that black box—the brain. But you cannot control what the brain does with that information, nor can you determine what emerges from that brain, that mind, that black box, that Skinner Box, in the end.

Bateson illustrated this by kicking a dog. A hypothetical dog. Kick that canine, and the dog follows a trajectory determined by Newtonian physics. But once the dog lands, its behavior is no longer predictable. The dog might run away, tail between its legs. It might turn back, and bite. It might skulk just out of reach, waiting for the opportunity to either attack or ask forgiveness. The argument from die-hard Skinnerians—that if we only knew all the factors and information that went into making the dog what it is we could accurately predict what the dog will do to any given stimulus—simply doesn't hold water. You can't know what goes on in the dog's brain, how it processes the fact it was kicked, nor how it acts upon what it thinks about being kicked. You might be able to control all the information that goes into the dog's brain, but you can't control what meaning the dog makes of that information, or what it does based on that meaning.

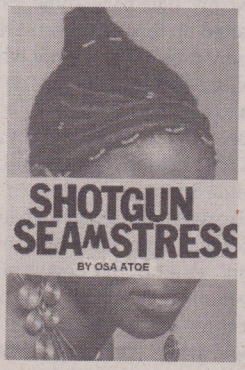
Frank Zappa scared the bejesus out of the parents of the baby boomers when, in the June 28, 1968 issue of *Life Magazine* dedicated to "The New Rock," he wrote: "If the right kind of beat makes you tap your foot, what kind of beat makes you curl your fist and strike?" Before we ascribe to Zappa prescience in predicting the evolution of punk rock out of hippie rock per this quote, understand that he had absolutely no truck with the idea that music of any sort could *make* people do anything. He, among many others, fought Tipper Gore and her ilk tooth-and-nail, unsuccessfully attempting to stop "concerned parents" from slapping warning stickers on all sorts of music "to protect the children." Now, the whole world has a warning sticker. When a string of murders associated with the horrorcore music scene hit the news, Mars, a Bay Area performer in that musical genre, repeated the popular horrorcore line: "Charles Manson was a Beatles fan."

So, not only is technology outpacing parental control, even if adults could reliably use technology to effectively shackle their children, that wouldn't guarantee control over what the kids think, or how they behave. After all, wasn't that the point behind the 1950s mantra of prosperity and progress for the parents of the baby boomers. Think of the suburbs as the Eisenhower Era's attempt at a Skinner Box, and then ask yourself how that turned out.

Returning to the Christmas bomber in conclusion, let's now link Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab with this column's main topic. TSA's response to his failed terrorist attack has been to deploy full body scanning technology that reveals virtually naked images of those individuals being scanned. But, of course, TSA has insisted that these scanners won't be used on children, out of fear that this might violate child pornography laws. So, what's al-Qaeda's next logical step? To strap explosives to babies going on airplanes in order to commit terrorist acts.

From baby boomers to baby bombers in one fell swoop.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@mac.com.



As far as I'm concerned, getting to go on tour is the highest privilege in the world. After my last band ended, I walked away from it feeling so extremely lucky, like I never thought I would have the chance in my lifetime to go to Europe for free, meet my heroes and experience that positive exchange that happens with people who are moved by the music you play for them. My experiences touring with that band were so magical and unexpected that after it was all over, I couldn't help but feel extremely satisfied and accomplished—like, "'I can die happy now. I've done more than I ever set out to do.'" Getting a second chance to go on tour with my new band, Deny It, felt like yet another dream come true.

Takiya who plays sax in Deny It travels most of the year, but she told me and Candice that she'd be back in New Orleans during November and December to work on band stuff. As soon as she got back to town, we practiced as much as possible, recorded a five-song cassette and set off in my 1990 Honda Civic hatchback named Perl on a tiny, little tour that took us to Austin, Houston, back through Nola, and then to Pensacola, Florida.

I set up the shows in Austin and New Orleans. For Austin, I got in touch with Mutating Meltdown who helped us get on a show at Trailer Space Records. This band called Metal Bunnies opened for us. Two boys in weird costumes playing instruments and three girls singing songs in unison about weed and getting their pussies licked. It seemed like the sort of band born out of friend hangouts and inside jokes, and I think I heard that the members were all teenagers. The multiple girl singer and minimal music thing reminded me of Delta 5 (even though they sound nothing like them) and it was refreshing to walk in and see a different kind of band setup. I feel like punks don't experiment nearly enough anymore. Three singers singing in unison sounds good! Dare to be different; try something new! We had also asked this band from Monterrey, NL, Mexico called XYX to play that show with us, but one of the members couldn't get time off from work. Booo! Also, when we got there, Mutating Meltdown said they couldn't play cuz their keyboard player, Chad, was sick, but then after we played, they decided to go for it anyway, with a friend filling in on keyboards. Mutating Meltdown put out my favorite 7"' this year and I am so inspired by Veronica and Erin who have been in one solid band after another: The Carrots, Finally Punk and now Mutating Meltdown. Erin also plays bass in a two-piece called Hatchet Wound, and I just found out that Veronica is the one who sews all those cute matching outfits for the Carrots. Is there anything those ladies can't do?

I'm not gonna say "Fuck Houston" even though I really want to because I feel like there's gotta be some kindred souls hiding out somewhere in that city. First of all, I know no one in that city personally, which makes setting up a good show kinda difficult. Candice got us on some benefit show at The Mink. This dude Jacob that set up the show told her that we'd be going on last and that we were the only out of town band on the show. Already, it sounded fishy to me. Even though setting up a good show for a touring band should be common sense, it just isn't. I would never put a touring band last unless they're a well-known band that everyone already knows about and loves. Duh. Anyway, we spent the entire night watching dude band after dude band (literally ten bands and not a single woman in one of them! How is that even possible?) We were supposed to go on at 12:30 a.m. but everything was running behind. 2 a.m. arrived, the Pavement cover band called Davement brought the house down, we still hadn't gone on, and Jacob told us we had no time to play. Booooo on you, Houston. We sat through DudeFest 2009 for nothing. Houston was the only show my old band played on a two-month tour where no one showed up. And hey, wasn't that letter-writer who called me racist a couple issues ago also from Houston? What's the fuckin

deal?? I do think that Houston can be redeemed. Plus, it was cool seeing so many Latin kids in bands. Up the brown punks! If you're in Houston and you think you can help us out with a different experience, please e-mail me! Positives from Houston: 1. Hip-hop duo that used Black Flag sample "Gimme Gimme Gimmee!!" 2. Meeting Sean Padilla of the Cocker Spaniels, 3. Getting out of all-lady lala land and realizing how important and necessary girl/queer punk shows are, 4. Realizing that even though we had a shitty experience, there was nothing else I'd rather be doing with my time. 5. Deeelicious Vietnamese tofu sandwiches for $2.50.

Next day, back home to New Orleans. Another No More Fiction event! It probably wasn't the best idea to play a show that you're putting on while you're on tour because you get there and you can't just like hang out and let things happen, you have to make things happen. Set up the PA! Make sure someone's at the door collecting dollars! Run back to the practice space and get more mic stands! It was hectic but fun. Ixnay, all-girl folk-pop trio, opened up the night. Kicktease from Baton Rouge was second up. I've written about them before. Adee calls them black Black Flag, and they're getting a better and better crowd in New Orleans each time they play. Deny It played to a very sweet and appreciative audience, and it was Brice's 34th birthday! After all these years (hahaha) he's still doing his part keeping Nowe Miasto warehouse going and putting out records for his friend's bands. Also, I'd like to claim that I put on the blackest punk show in the country, with a whopping four black musicians participating—and all women!

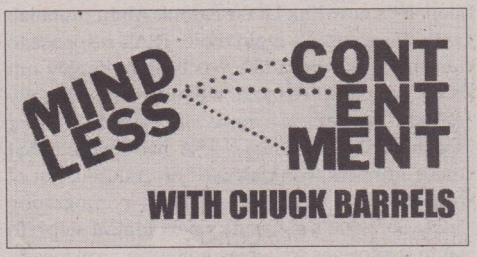
Pensacola really delivered. We had our show at this house called 309 that's been a punk house for like twenty years or maybe even longer. I've known so many punks from Pensacola over the years, and for whatever reason, that scene produces some particularly bad ass women. Kelsey, who lives at 309, set up our show for us and I feel like she totally tapped into the spirit of DIY punk rock feminism and made some amazing shit happened. First of all, she started a band with her friend Lara called Feral Pride so that she could play with our band. I know that every time a group of girls gets together to play music, someone cries out "riot girl!" but I swear this time it's true! They switched off on drums (just toms and snare, no kick) and guitar. All the parts were super simple and their attitude was fearless. Kelsey doesn't seem to have a shy bone in her body. They sang their songs together (let there be a new trend of unison singing!) "Girl yr hair's so soft/Why'd you go and cut it off?" The first band that played was also stellar. They were called Solanas Judgend, they also formed to play our show. They started off with a sound sample from my favorite movie, *Born In Flames*. It was the part where Zella Wiley, played by Florynce Kennedy is amping the Women's Army up to take arms and start a revolution. She says something like, "You've got to have the right time and the right place and I'm beginning to think that this is it!" and at that very moment, screaming staticy vocals and noisy guitar took over the room. Somewhere in the middle of their set, which was about six minutes long, the guitarist starts reading aloud from The SCUM Manifesto. I know this sounds like something I would dream up, but I swear it actually happened. Can't wait to make it back there to play with those bands again. Pensacola, keep up the good work!

Thanks to Veronica, Erin, Trailer Space Records, Kelsey, 309, everyone who came to our shows and even Jacob for an amazing and eye-opening tour experience!

Houstonites, get in touch:

No More Fiction Shows: nomorefiction @gmail.com

Deny It: www.myspace.com/denitynola



I'm often asked "Hey Chuck, what the hell is wrong with music today?" The only answer I really have = no fucking guts. Yet these kids want all the glory. I guess it's nothing new. I'm not saying every new record needs to be as good as Funhouse or anything. But at least don't insult me with some of this half-assed regurgitated crap. Come at me with some original moves, some unique vision, something I've never heard done before. And if it is something I've heard before, at least do it via a dazzling display of talent and blow my hair back some. Shit. I don't how I got started on this rant. I want this column to be about why music is good, not why so much out there sucks. Sorry for harshing on you bros a bit there. Let's talk about girls…

Or maybe we'll talk about boys. Miami's JACUZZI BOYS released their debut LP this past year, and while I wouldn't put it in the "barn-burner" category, it's the perfect record for burning in another way—say torching some doobage while cruisin' around the town on a balmy Saturday evening in your Monte Carlo SS. Or maybe perfect for roastin' some logs (and some more doobage) while you and your bros pound brews and play grab-ass with some hot chicks around the campfire. Day or night. High or drunk. A real classy record, as evinced by the cover art. True rock'n'roll that has a peculiar Floridian southern flair. Swampy but not sludgy. Marshy? A little bit of some fringed vest hippie moves, but they keep it freaky instead of folky, which I dig. A dancer and a romancer. This one has been out for a bit, and looks close to going OOP, so you better move fast. (www.floridasdying.com)

I try not to write about too much hardcore music in my column, because I figure there are enough other meatheads in these pages talking about it. But sometimes a hardcore record comes around that is so good I feel obligated to mention it. Philistine by DRY ROT is one of those LPs. I heard these guys are Jewish or something, but that's cool with me because this thing is a total fucking ripper. DIE KREUZEN like blasts of vicious tooth-busting hardcore, but that's only half the battle. These weirdo Hebrews bust out some wild alterna-rock moves here and some effed up guitar tracks there and just get super fuckin' weird all over. Sometimes it's as if the little man from Twin Peaks started a hardcore band, except they're called DRY ROT and not I AM THE ARM or something ridiculous. I think grindcore and emo bands have the market cornered on Twin Peaks-influenced names. Lame. But man, that show was great when you were high. So is this LP! Best hardcore record of the year says me and this doobie! (www.partsunknownrecords.com)

Surprisingly, I'm not a huge SPRINGSTEEN fan. Wait… am I even allowed to mention The Boss in the hallowed pages of *MRR*? Well, either way, New Jersey has a new boss now and his name is Daniel DiMaggio and his band is called HOME BLITZ. He's just released his first official full length after a slew of singles on reputable underground labels, and it's called *Out of Phase* and it is beautiful maaaan. No, seriously, the stuff I was rambling about at the beginning of this column, this is what I'm talking about here. This kid has guts. He has a vision. And it's a pleasure to see it executed. It's difficult to describe, but let's say it's a combination of the last twenty years of punk, hardcore, garage, power-pop, indie-rock and more. Major influences seem to be GAME THEORY, COCK SPARRER, JONATHAN RICHMAN and ANGRY SAMOANS. How do you like that? One of the most unique and fulfilling records you're going to hear this decade. It manages to be charmingly casual sounding, yet deeply complex upon further examination, shifting gears from hard pop rocking to noisy punk at the drop of a pick. If you don't enjoy this, I assume you lack a soul. If you need further proof of the quality of this disc, the fact it is on the Richie Records label should seal the deal, as we know those fingerbangers release nothing but the most quality wares. (testostertunes.blogspot.com)

I put this HORRIBLY WRONG LP on and thought I had just been transported back to 1995 where I was twistin' up a fat-ass joint with Greg Lowery. Brash, obnoxious, blown out, "C'mon And Bleed With…" is a real fine LP. If this had been released fifteen years ago, these kids would have been kings. As it is, they just take me back to a more innocent time, and I respect them for releasing such a vintage sounding effort. It shows a real lack of care for what other people think, which is what I think we need more of these days. At its best, it reminds me of CANDY SNATCHERS and ANTISEEN and some of the more raw Rip Off Records acts like the BRIDES, with some Big Neck sleaze a la the MISTREATERS. And this isn't to say they are a total revival act, as they do bring some modern punk velocity and violence to the table and eschew the "Fonzie" moves of the nineties garage era. Another ripper, get this and a twelve pack, lock the doors and start kicking over furniture. (www.myspace.com/eradicatorrecords)

IN THE RED RECORDS DEPT: Larry Hardy is like the George Steinbrenner of garage rock. You might hate his signing of all the good free

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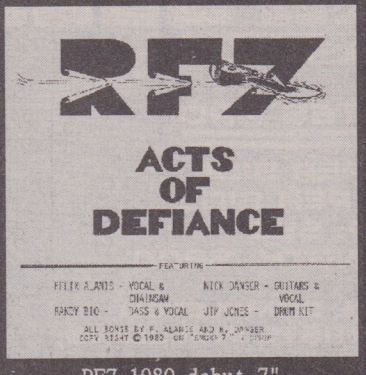

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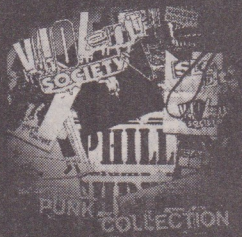

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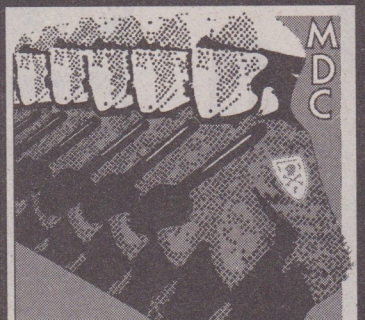

MDC debut LP reissue

Circle One patterns of force LP reissue

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agents, but you're just crying into your beer come World Series time. LH has pulled some serious shit out of his hat since last update. One being the BLACK JASPERS LP, some KBD-styled punkitude from KING KHAN and one of the MOO-RAT FINGERS (who were a great random Euro garage-sleaze act back in the day). Sure to disappoint little girls into the KK & BBQ SHOW, it will appeal to those looking for some raw ass garage-punk. And in another competition-decimating move, ITR has repressed the long OOP *The Master's Bedroom...* LP by THEE OH SEES. Definitely their best full length and the record that really broke them into the upper crust of the garage rock scene, this is a long overdue happening. Hey Larry, give some other labels a chance! (www.intheredrecords.com)

COOL SINGLE DEPT: I'll tell you what, Australia is where it's fucking at right now. EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING, UV RACE, OOGA BOOGAS, JOHN SHARKEY III, TOTAL CONTROL, they have shit on lock down there, plus the greatest concentration of quality print zines per capita (I recommend picking up an issue of *Negative Guest List* at any cost, and fellow columnist DX's *Distort* zine is genius as well). I couldn't be happier, as I've been following and loving this little prison colony's antics since I first heard the SAINTS and on through the BIRTHDAY PARTY to VENOM P STINGER to COSMIC PSYCHOS to the SAILORS. Lovable scamps, all of them. So, damn cool single, this 7" from CHINESE BURNS. Just fantastic. Best Aussie 7" of the year? Best 7" of the year overall? It's at least in contention, that's for sure. Recorded by Mikey from ECSR, these kids outdumb the UV RACE with four beautiful tracks of sheer moronic punk rock with some drunken wit. Fast and hard, just like a kangaroo penis. Super limited, I have one, and you don't. Cry me a fucking river. RIP Rowland S. Howard! (www.myspace.com/banalarama)

COOL TAPE DEPT: I gushed over BUTCHER COVER last time out, well, I think I found the perfect band for them to release a split 7" with: the LANDLORDS from somewhere in Upstate, NY. Some of the heaviest and most pummeling shit I've heard in some time. It's like industrial music, but without the drum machines or keyboards to ruin it and just the face-mashing drive. This tape appears to be self-released, but I have to imagine a label like Parts Unknown would have a boner for this. I know I do. For fans of KILSLUG, RUSTED SHUT or DRUNKDRIVER. (myspace.com/landlordsny)

COOL REISSUE DEPT: Radio Heartbeat Records, known for high quality power-pop reissues, has stepped out of the box a bit and released the recorded works of CRUSHED BUTLER. CB were UK proto-punk heavies, recording what could have been called punk rock as early as 1969. "Factory Grime" is all class, think COLOURED BALLS, THIRD WORLD WAR or PINK FAIRIES. VERY 'EAVY. *Uncrushed* is the name of the LP, it comes in a beautiful sleeve with extensive liners and great art and is a necessary release featuring the pre-GORILLAS Jesse Hector. They don't make 'em like this anymore ladies. And speaking of ladies, RH reissued THE QUICK's classic *Mondo Deco* LP in tandem with this. Talk about killin' it. (www.radioheartbeat.net)

That's all for this round, girls. I hope you had as much fun as I did. Next time out we'll discuss the Baseball Hall of Fame selections and maybe talk about some punk rock too. So until then, don't let your meat loaf.

Home of the free and the brave. Live free or die. Shoot first; ask questions later. Kill 'em all, let God sort 'em out. These were the mottos of a brash, impetuous, audacious-to-a-fault nation.

That nation is dead. Once we Americas did brave things: We sat on boats, crossing the English Channel, knowing that most of us would die on the beach in Normandy. We sat at the lunch counter in the Deep South, waiting for white goons to beat us up. We also did brave things that were stupid: When the president sent us to Vietnam, some of us went, risking death. Others went to Canada, sacrificing everything for principle. We bungee jumped. We tried New Coke. Bravery can be dumb.

But it's still brave. Then came 9/11/01. It was the defining event of the decade that ends today, a fin-de-siècle moment for a previously proud nation's once glorious history.

The Fear Decade had begun.

Bin Laden wanted the destruction of the World Trade Center to smack oblivious Americans' upside their collective heads, to draw their attention to their nation's toxic foreign policy (especially in the Middle East), maybe even to demand that the US stop propping up dictators. It didn't work.

Rather than prompt them to reassess their government's behavior, Americans got angry. Anger, as any shrink will tell you, comes from fear. And fear makes you do stupid things.

Fear of future attacks. Fear of Muslims. Of anyone wearing a turban. Foreigners. The next thing we knew, the paranoid delusionals leading us convinced us that fearful people and things were everywhere. Mail full of anthrax. Gas stations stalked by snipers. Threat levels: orange, red, etc. (but it's always orange). Avian flu. Eeek! Stop these things! Do whatever it takes!

Throwing innocent Muslim men in prison? It was worth it to (possibly, probably not) prevent one attack. Torture? We couldn't take any chances—what if the victim knew that a bomb was about to go off? Because one lunatic tried to blow up his joke of a shoe bomb on a flight from Paris to Miami, America's 800 million air travelers are ordered to take off their 1.6 billion shoes every year. Because a half-dozen Brits thought about trying to blow up planes using hair peroxide and Tang (yes, really), millions of nursing mothers were told to dump bottles containing thousands of gallons of breast milk into trashcans at airport security checkpoints. Never mind the scientists who said such plots couldn't work. And now, the most fearsome fear of all: the Paris-to-Detroit underwear bomber. Airport security is about to turn *really* ugly.

Governments act stupid and mean. That's normal. What the Fear Decade made different was us. It made us let the government do whatever it wanted.

Fear is irrational. As I pointed out at the time, Iraq's longest-range missiles couldn't reach Europe, much less the United States. In other words, it didn't matter if Saddam *had* had WMDs. It didn't matter to us, anyway. Yet we destroyed our economy and murdered two million people to invade Iraq.

I watched a legless vet, humiliated and detained by a TSA agent as he repeatedly explained why the metal detector kept going off: his body was full of titanium, courtesy of the Iraqi insurgency. I watched. So did other passengers. We said nothing.

We were afraid.

Not just at the airport. We were afraid at work. Unions were deader than dead, the government was in the hands of gangster capitalists, and the economy started tanking the instant Bill Clinton began packing his bags. We were overleveraged, maxed out and one paycheck away from losing everything. Ask for a raise? Demand longer vacations? Are you crazy, brother? Like Jews assembled in the freezing courtyard of a concentration camp, we stared straight ahead, terrified, hoping not to be noticed, to live to see the next "selection."

Fear everywhere! National Guardskids, all of twenty years old and decked out in their best Kevlar, brandishing automatic weapons taller than they are at women and children as they came out of commuter rail stations. Annoying, sure—but what if...what if...what if *something happened?* We heard that the government was listening to our phone calls and reading our email but instead of summoning up outrage at this brazen and illegal violation of privacy we took cold comfort in that hoary chestnut: "If you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear."

But we were afraid. We all were. We still are.

Then we elected Barack Obama. We didn't vote for him because he was accomplished. He wasn't. Or because we liked his ideas. He hardly had any. We voted for him because he seemed so calm.

But he was afraid too. More than that, he wanted us to keep being scared—of the same exact stuff Bush had had us so frightened of! Lions and tigers and Muslims, oh my! The Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan, even though the Pentagon said there were fewer than 100 Al Qaeda guys in the whole country! Iraq, still, although he couldn't quite explain why, and the bad guys who didn't do anything wrong at Guantánamo, just in case.

Now it's all fear, all the time. Fear of diseases (H1N1). Fear of evil banks (feed them or they'll go away, which would somehow be worse). We were arrogant once, loud and silly and funny and crazy as hell, and we were Americans.

Now we're timid and pissy and pissed off, and I don't recognize, much less like, what we've become.

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

MEXICAN CASSETTE:

This Mexican hardcore band sounds like a psychedelic SEPTIC DEATH with the production of PARABELLUM (Columbian death metal). INSERVIBLES sent me a package of delicate constitution, and it arrived with a few rips and strains that had me worried contents had been lost en route, but on inspection the two cassettes inside had suffered no damage. Unfortunately the *Cultura Pendeja* tape was warped to fuck, which gave their already twisted raw production a seasick gait, and a few seconds of it had me feeling paranoid high, awful high, can't sleep watching ceiling spin high, so I had to put it aside and replace it almost immediately. I can report with great enthusiasm that their *s/t* tape suffered no such magnetic disturbance, and the promise of the first tape is delivered minus sickening gliding feeling. There's something about the Spanish and Italian language that makes profane statements sound more sickening and hostile, and I believe this band is full of them, the singer has that snotty CCMF scratch that sounds like he's on ice and about to break into your house and fuck a hole in the side of your head.

This band deserves wide accolades—they are truly one of the most interesting hardcore bands in the world, and I don't know anything at all about them. Someone write to me and fill me in, or send me a Mexican fanzine with bonus translated insert that explains their views on the popular '80s comedy film *The Three Amigos*.

DUTCH VINYL:

Brothers and sisters! Sorry to do this to you, but the momentous occasion of the month was when Mikey (ECSR) walked into my house and handed me the IVY GREEN record saying it was the best Australian punk record not from Australia (IVY GREEN finger dykes, see?), and sure enough this record is like a beautiful mixture of the plodding repetitions of X *Aspirations*, the tuneful snarl of the SAINTS' *I'm Stranded* and the tightly executed power pop punk of VICTIMS singles.

I know nothing about this band, but the reissue I've been spinning is on Pogo records, which Mikey explained is a subsidiary of Warners or Alternative Tentacles or BMG or something, and the slight haze over the lettering has the distinctive look of my other Italian bootlegs (*Pink Flag, Kings Of Oblivion)* that most of you have probably surrendered to after years of searching for a nice playing original in vain.

I was familiar with the song "Sue" from *Killed By Death Vol. 4127.2*, and while it sounded great, there was nothing terribly ball tearing about it. Fortunately, it sounds little like their other hits, and when situated in the context of this record is a nice break from the relentless trudge of the other tunes, which primarily revolve around single chords and the occasional piano plang. Truly, this is without a doubt one of the most exciting records I've heard from that era that hasn't been played to death and hyped over its potential, and it's a real sick pleasure to come across this so late in the game and be reacquainted with the feeling of hearing punk being written without having too much punk as a reference point. Surely, the singer found something pleasurable in Johnny Rotten's exaggerated hostility and the Buzzcocks' riffing, but most of this sounds like they've pulled it out of stolen garage licks and genuinely inventive song writing that draws a lot from the Kraut world. The fact that it's so similar to the first wave of Australian punk, and even more importantly, exactly what the people around me are finding inspirational in their own music (this really would fit in on the *World's Lousy* compilation with STRAIGHT ARROWS and UV RACE and EDDY CURRENT and SUPER WILD HORSES) is what has given it such impact, and that's why I have to apologize, because there's obviously a wide range of worthy vinyl subjects to rap about and I'm drooling over some old cunts.

But, accept my apology, track this down from the local pervert in your neighborhood who has their broadband channeled in the right direction (I couldn't tell you where to get it, I don't buy records online unless Brian Eno played on them or they involve members of GEHENNA), and kick it out. This is one of the best punk records anywhere and anytime. And, if you know any other recordings this band made, please tape them onto a cassette for me and mail them to my address with some information about the band. Thank you.

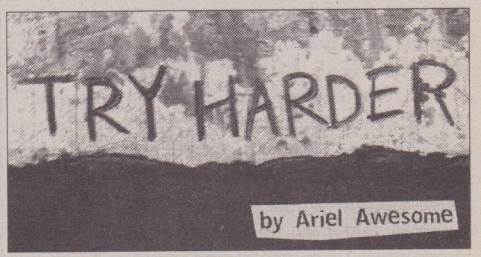
AUSTRALIAN FANZINE:

So, I talked about Australian fanzines last month, but I haven't had much international mail worth writing about in the mean time. There's a high bar for hardcore fanzines here and most times people are attempting to push it higher. Most of the US and Euro hardcore fanzines I get are characterized by poor writing, seemingly content to cut and paste a couple of pixilated Cro-Mags photos from the internet with a poorly edited spiel on a useless record. I haven't held much hope in anything I pick up that doesn't come with the knowing paper size and stock of an Australian hardcore zine, so when I picked up *Rats Eyes*, I was holding a candle, and my faith was not in vain.

The editor Richard opens with a dedication to Chard (9 SHOCKS, H100's) and a brief explanation of the purpose of the zine (anti-social music). The eloquent introduction explains where he took the name of the zine from ("...a determined band playing only for themselves, depriving themselves of "the simple joys of life" to avoid the trap the modern man has set for himself, who set a standard rarely ever matched. I could not name this zine after any other."), and following this is a friendly Q&A with Adelaide's BLOODCLOT FAGGOTS which reveals their candid intentions but doesn't really give any meat to chew on. Following, a series of well-written reviews reveal Richard's impeccable taste in modern hardcore, praising the oft-ignored glory of US hardcore's greater moments in CONDOMINIUM and VIDEO DISEASE. After a well executed interview with MIDDLE AMERICA that serves as an introduction more than really explores what the fuck they are on about, Richard tears through a couple of fanzine reviews and closes with a repulsive comic most relevant to residents of inner-city Melbourne.

One issue in, and Richard's obviously paid close attention to the hits and misses of the last five years of fanzine writing, and had been biding his time in the chair sharpening his tools and tightening his style. I think this shows a lot of promise and joins *Counterfeit Garbage* as my favorite new fanzine of 2009, so by the time this issue of *MRR* hits the stand he will hopefully have followed up with a new issue. Keep an eye out.

If you play punk, hardcore, garage noise or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you *don't* live in the US, Japan or Sweden, please get in touch. My address is DANIEL STEWART: PO BOX 239 NORTH CARLTON VICTORIA 3054 AUSTRALIA.



SOUND OF A NEW PUNK BEING BORN.

I'm still dealing with the fact that my baby niece asked me to buy her records this year for Christmas. Every punk has at least had a tiny fantasy about this moment. I mean, who doesn't want to be asked by a younger person dear to them to share something they are passionate about?

As wonderful and life changing as punk has been for most all of us, we are almost compulsive sharers. We want to tell all our friends which records and bands are awesome so they can get in on it. Even better than that is when you get to introduce a long beloved band to someone who's never heard them before, there may be no better feeling, one full of vicarious pride and excitement. Here the opportunity to give any and all of those bands to a young and eager friend was before me, and I couldn't think of what to get her. I felt like I had all of punk stretched out before me to choose for her. Where would I have started if I could have known what there was?

I can't even remember what started my slide into punk, how I tumbled off the cliff. The Ramones had a big part in it, and Operation Ivy brought me to DIY. But it started before them. I was primed by my brother's old Santa Cruz skate videos and random tapes left around the house that had Suicidal Tendencies, Black Flag,

Agent Orange sharing time with my brothers getting stoned reggae mixes. I used to fast forward through Maxi Priest, Black Uhuru, and Steel Pulse to get to the fast stuff. Then I would jump around on the couch in my slouch socks and shout along.

So when my first encounter with punk in the world came, I was more than ready for it. It was like coming home, finding out that my secret love wasn't just a thing my brothers had that I wanted. Like everything else, it was something I could go get, go find, go be. When I saw the Ramones the summer I turned thirteen, it was like a flash of lightning—I wanted to be punk. I went home and tried to use Clorox to bleach out parts of my hair. I took a sharpie and wrote "FUCK" on one of my dad's old shirts that was in the rag pile. I threw bleach all over my JC Penny's stretch pants and put on some red '70s boots of my mom's. The transformation was almost overnight.

I took the money my mom gave me to get my now-fried-and-orange hair fixed, went to the one record store that I knew how to find, and asked for punk cassettes. The extremely sweet, older man helped me pick out the Sex Pistols, the Clash, and, as I demanded, the Ramones. I played those tapes over and over on my Walkman until they got all warbley and faint.

When I was sixteen, I begged my dad to let me unearth one of his old turntables in the garage so I could listen to the small box of punk records I had assembled from garage sales and thrift stores. Hardly any of them would play, they were so warped and scratched to hell, and the ones that did play were terrible new wave or just didn't resonate. But I listened to them anyway. I liked their smell, and I liked watching the record spin with the needle singing along in the groove.

I didn't start buying records in earnest until I was nineteen, and finally started seeing touring bands on a weekly basis and buying their merch. I never got bit by the collecting bug. I don't want to have every record, or delight in having exceptionally rare records, but I want to have the records I love. I want to physically own the albums or singles that mean something to me, and I'll pick up records of bands I see and like, but the records themselves aren't the passion.

All of this, relevant or not, went into my choices for my budding punk niece.

I've over thought it, I know, but in the end, it's good I had a strategy. I decided to give her a small smattering of the classics:

Black Flag – *Everything Went Black*. She lives in a tiny town off a big highway in the central valley. The population is about 5,000, and less than 200 kids go to her high school. The main industry is dairy, so there is always at least a hint of cow shit in the air. There are only five tiny barren blocks to downtown. Most people would describe this as sleepy, or quaint, but to most of the young people of this little hamlet, it is two words: fucking boring. Since rural hell can be a lot like suburban hell in its monotony and frustration, I thought she might connect to Black Flag's seething.

Bikini Kill – *s/t* 12". She has a guitar that her dad got her for her birthday, but she doesn't play it. She likes having a guitar, she wants to play it, she wants to learn, but she's kind of convinced herself it's too complicated or too hard for her to do. I want her to hear and see girls playing; I want her pick up her guitar and feel she has every right and capability to play it. I think Bikini Kill has said that effectively to a lot of girls.

Ramones – *Ramones Mania*. This is my one nostalgic choice, since my first fateful punk show was the Ramones doing one of their farewell tours. Their music will always hold that magical, crystallized moment for me when I first wanted to be punk. It was ugly and wild, and that was what I wanted to be, or rather who I was, and it was suddenly not just okay, but cool.

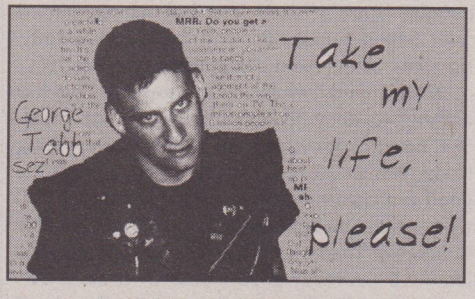
Plus, I threw in Black Sabbath, AC/DC, and B-52s to psych out her dad so he wouldn't scrutinize her punk records too closely. I love my brother, but becoming anybody's dad will put the pressure on you to be a stickler and a square. And he was already a little bit of both.

The holidays are long over, but I keep thinking of more and more bands she might like. Scouring the bins for doubles of records I don't want to give away, but that I want her to hear. I've even got a stack of CDRs ready to mail (Warsaw, Neurosis, Amebix, Earth, and Rudimentary Peni) since hearing she is really into a certain nu metal band that shall not be named, since this column is for posterity. I don't want to grievously embarrass her if she ever reads this.

If she does ever read this, I want to thank her for asking me for records. I'd also want to tell her that in the end, as exciting as this all is for me, she's gonna have to find the bands that really speak to her. The best I can do is point her in the right direction.

After all, punks make themselves.

Please send a list of your first punk experiences and who gave them to you to: arielawesome@gmail.com, *and any mail should be tied to the leg of a sleeping pigeon, that is fed bread crumbs bearing my address. What's my address? Oh, well, um…*



THE TABB THEOREM

"Thank you, dear," the old lady with the walker says to me as I hold the elevator door open for her with my right foot.

"Uh huh," I reply, half-awake at the unholy hour of 8:30 am.

"Well, you have a nice day," she says to me as she limps on by, coughing up what sounds like nice solid lung cookies.

"Uh huh," I tell my fellow juror, who, like me, had to just pass through a battery of cops asking all sorts of questions.

"What's your business here?" one officer asked, as he chewed on a donut and got white powder on his mustache.

"Where do you think you're going?" asked another, as he tucked in his shirt and did the manly ball-scratch.

Wonderful.

As I made my way down the hallway of the 11th floor of some building on Centre Street, I silently cursed for allowing myself to be trapped in the spider web of jury duty. I'd envisioned the whole Manhattan legal process to be one huge sticky mess, and now, here I was, like Vincent Price in *The Fly*. Help Me.

After a few minutes of wandering around aimlessly, I found the "room" I was supposed to go to. It was more like one long fucking cave. Dark, and full of scary people. Coughing and hacking up nasty germs that I would be sure to catch. It was worse than the subway. Gross.

Next, it was time to wait.

Wait until they called out my name.

George Tabb.

That's Tabb. With a "T".

One of the last important letters of the alphabet. Well, next to "W".

And what I mean by "important" is determined by the first letter of your last name. Let's face it, "U, V, X, Y and Z" aren't that popular.

And we are all called in alphabetical order.

By everyone.

From your first grade teacher, to your last nurse at the senior citizen center. To God himself.

"I'm ready to go into heaven now," I'd tell the guy with the white beard.

"Shut-up and sit down," he'd say with a booming voice, "your last name starts with "T". We are only up to the letter "D". You got at least two centuries before we get *near* you."

Yup. I was fucked. Just like I was now with jury duty. Only thing to do was sit. And wait. And think.

Think about how my placement in the alphabet has affected my placement in life.

Fucking letter "T".

***

"It's not fair," explained My Future Ex-Wife, a couple of months earlier, "I really wanted to be picked for a jury."

"Are you nuts?" I asked her as P.J., our seven pound Yorkshire Terrier, barked in agreement.

"And I wasn't picked because of my last name. By the time they got to me it was too late. The jury box was full. It's discrimination."

I told her that since we both had last names near the end of the alphabet, this is the way things would always be, and to get used to it.

"But it's not fair," she repeated. P.J. barked in agreement.

"Are you fucking nuts, too?" I asked my dog, "What, you want to serve on a jury?"

P.J. Tabb just tilted his head sideways, put up his ears, and licked his lips.

It was then we discussed what we now call the Tabb Theorem.

A theory at least as important as Newton's Laws of Gravity, Einstein's Laws of Physics, and whoever it was that discovered dogs lick themselves because they can.

And the Tabb Theorem goes something like this:

In American society, we are trained from an early age to respond, in large groups, to our last name. This is sometimes called "roll call." In almost every instance these "roll calls" are done in alphabetical order. Therefore, if a person's last name begins with the letter "A", he is most likely to be one of the first persons called. As the letters in the alphabet progress, one is more likely to be called later and later. If one has a last name starting with the letters "T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z", he will most likely be called last.

On the surface, this may seem as a mere inconvenience to those blessed with names from the end of the alphabet. But upon further examination, it becomes quite apparent that there is much more to this than just a matter of patience.

Much more.

We, as young Americans, according to the Tabb Theorem, are trained to be either alpha aggressors or passive pussies, and all because of a last name our grandfathers probably mispronounced at Ellis Island some 80 years ago.

If we were lucky enough to get a last name starting with a letter from the beginning of the alphabet, our position in life is probably much higher than those who have the latter letters (P-Z).

By higher, I mean better paying jobs, jobs higher on the corporate ladder, more powerful political positions, and even more success in the arts/entertainment field. Just look at Elvis. Does one really believe he'd be nominated as a man of the century if the name he used to promote himself was Presley?

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

The way the Tabb Theorem works is like this. Those born with a last name containing one of the first fifteen letters of the alphabet are more likely to achieve much more in life than those stuck with the later eleven letters. And the reasons for this are as follows:

1. Having a last name starting with A through O means that when a young individual is called upon in the classroom, he or she will get the chance to voice their opinions and/or solve the answer to a problem first.

2. Being able to talk first gives those lucky letter holders a chance to express themselves more freely.

3. While expressing themselves, others will tend to listen. Until they get bored. But in the meantime, self-importance begins to become realized.

4. Trying to get attention from other children after their minds have begun to wander (about halfway through the alphabet) is like trying to get a straight story from a lawyer.

5. Subconsciously, this means that those with letters late in the alphabet, are more likely to feel less important, because less attention is paid to them.

6. Feeling less important leads to lower self-esteem and self-confidence, which starts the psychological spiral downward that will continue throughout one's life until intense psycho-therapy has begun.

7. Psycho-therapy may answer many of life's questions, and lead one to realize that their parental units were damaged, but it does not change the fact that you will still be called next to last in whatever it is you do.

8. Which of course, brings us back to Doh!

So, to paraphrase the Tabb Theorem, you're fucked if your name starts with the letter "P" and beyond.

This all may sound like some sort of over simplification, but not when it's really contemplated.

Who were latest bunch of Presidents of The United States of America? The leaders of the free world?

Well, there's George Bush 2. And before him, Bill Clinton. The letters "C" and "B". Before that was Reagan, but he doesn't count because he was an actor, and any self-esteem he may or may not have was fake anyway.

Before that, was Carter. Before him, Ford. Before him, Nixon. Before him, Johnson, and before that, Kennedy. The letters "C", "F", "N", "J" and "K". All letters from the first half of the English alphabet.

But wait. It gets better.

Rich people.

Successful with money.

Like Bill Gates. Or Howard Hughes. Malcolm Forbes, or Bill Clinton. Oh, I already mentioned him. And there are many more. Of course, there is Donald Trump. A "T" name. But there's always an exception to the rule. Even if it lumbers around drunk hitting on anything with two legs and two breasts.

Then there are the great thinkers. Who had the confidence to get their ideas well known. Like Edison, Einstein, Asimov, Franklin, Jefferson, and of course, Dr. Joyce Brothers. Do you think these people would have freely expressed their ideas if they had always been called on last during their formative years? Right. Blow me.

Artists? Musicians?

Here it gets a little tricky. But the Tabb Theorem still holds. Just look at the Beatles. John Lennon. Paul McCartney. George Harrison. And Ringo Starr, the exception to the rule. But also, the drummer. The Beatles were successful because three of their four last names started with letters before "P", and more importantly, the name of the band began with the letter "B".

Now, I know what you're thinking. This has nothing to do with an individual's last name. But, upon closer examination, it has everything to do with it. See, the guys in the band with the good last names had enough self-esteem to call themselves The Beatles, rather than, lets say, The Roaches or The Worms. The Beatles start with the letter " B". A really good letter. "B" is after "A", and before "C". Therefore, when a Beatles record is categorized at let's say, a radio station or a store, one is more likely to see it and give it a whirl rather than a later-lettered album.

Other successful musicians include Bowie, Berry, Diddly, Dylan, Daltry, Cobain, Elvis, Garcia, Hendrix, Jagger, Joplin, Morrison, Puff Daddy, etc. So what if most of them are dead, or on their way, they once again prove that the Tabb Theorem works.

Of course there are the latter lettered musicians that some may think of as successful. Like Keith Richards, or Bruce Springsteen. First of all, Keith Richards is dead. He just doesn't know it. And second of all, Springsteen is from New Jersey. He may have been smart enough to call his band by the letter "E". But we all know that just stands for "Exit", as in "you're from Jersey? Which exit?"

Then there are the artists. Not to mention "The Artist", who was smart enough to change his name from a "P" to an "A."

Van Gogh. Pollack. Despite their last names they were successful all right. But only after they died.

Actually, many artists did achieve a high status in the global community *even* with bad last names. Warhol, Picasso, Roshenburg, Stella, Speilburg, Salinger, Rodin, and godZilla just to name a few.

So why is *this* possible? Because artists throughout history have generally been labeled as "different." A sort of under-dog, if you will. The under-dog is always fighting, and sometimes, in spite of himself, wins. The artist can get away with a lot more because he is often a sympathetic character to others. Whether he likes it or not.

Speaking of sympathetic characters, none of them have been recent mayors of New York City. But they all had the good last names. Guiliani, Bloomberg, Dinkins, Koch, Lindsey, Beame, and even LaGuardia. Who they named an airport after.

And the mob bosses. Almost the same thing as the mayors. There's Gotti, Castellano, Gambino, Luchese, Giovoni, Gravono, Capone, and even Corleone. Of course there are also the Sopranos, but they're smart enough to hang-out at Budda-Bing-Badda-Boom. With a "B." Got that, Pop-N-Fresh?

Then there is the biggie.

God.

Who gave his son two good names.

Jesus Christ.

But the kid ended up nailed to a cross sucking vinegar.

Not the epitome of success, huh?

Fuck.

I guess that blows my whole theory.

Take My Life, Please.

www.myspace.com/helpgeorgetabb

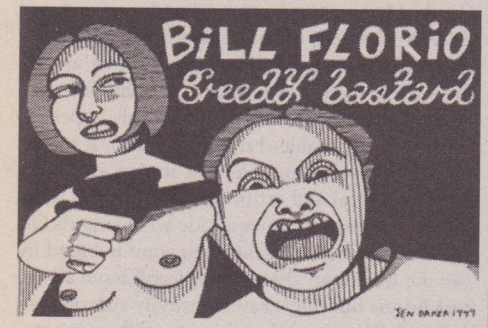
Endnotes:

The Saboteur from EA fucking rocks. What a great WW II game. You get to sneak around and kill Nazis? What could be more fun? Blowing them up! You get to do that too! Awesome!!! Also *Bass Pro – The Strike* complete with Xbox360 fishing rod/controller rocks the house!! It feels so real it's incredible. Like real fishing. I gave this to my nephews and they *love* it. Their grandfather owns a bait and tackle shop in North Carolina, and even he thinks this game is very realistic! It really is *good* fun for the whole family, and there is nothing like that feeling of having a "bite" on the line. Best holiday title, in my opinion!

The new *Royal Flush* magazine/Book 6 is out, and man, is it amazing. Funniest stuff since *National Lampoon* was good and in print. Great interview with Joan Jett and Alice Cooper, great articles, best comic strips anywhere, and over all,

just wonderful! Get this! Also, the new *Mass Movement* magazine is out and has got an interview with the guy who does the Dalek voices on Dr. Who! You go, Tim!

Happy New Year, everyone!



For the past three days I've been sitting around the Bronx Court House where I was called for jury duty. The New York court system calls me every four years, I can assume sometime between the summer and winter Olympics, I'll get called. Once they even called me in two years by accident and I drove over and left my grandpa waiting in the car with a bunch of bananas and a jug to pee in, so I didn't have to pay for parking or take a bus. While somewhat irritating, civil service has inspired me to write a column with a renewed sense of American spirit.

Anyway, I took the opportunity to do some thinking while deprived of my PDA phone (no cameras allowed in court) and the whole getting off work thing. I'm happy to say much of this was working on my action plan to stay off a jury and consideration of all possible types of trials and why no lawyer would feel safe having me sway a bunch of Bronx bus riders, being someone who loathes the bus. Basically, the conclusion I formulated is that no legal party wants someone who looks eager to be on a jury. People too willing to share their life experiences and who seem like they'd love to stand in judgment over someone's life or future rewards will creep out even the creepiest lawyer. So I sort of went for it.

Since they can't give you any details of the case, I'll make them up according to my own prejudices and the basic facts told. A three-year-old kid fell out of a fifth floor apartment window, he survived with some long standing injuries (no details were given on how bad) and the slumlord and/or his insurance company refuses to grant any settlement out of court due to something having to do with the self-installation of an air conditioner and the removal of window guards. Now I contemplated putting it on very thick. When they asked me, "Do you have problems with landlords in general?" I could have answered, "It would depend on how many buildings they own and how decrepit a street they were on, and if the name sounded Russian." Or, "Do you believe people should sue if they are injured no matter what circumstances?", "It would depend on how much they were asking for and if they had jobs in the first place."

I didn't do any of that, I told them that I had worked previously for insurance investigators who did video surveillance of fraud, and that I had been run over by a car when I was seven and wasn't happy with the out of court settlement. I felt it was best to seem like a wild card, where I could have a very strong negative opinion for either party. It worked. They kicked me out of there before lunch. They also kicked out two bus drivers, go figure.

So while I was in the jury room, they had nice LCD televisions playing CNN. I don't watch television news very often which is a good thing, because I can actually notice how much it degrades from year to year. I'm assuming because the FOX news channel is so popular with its *New York Post* style journalism, CNN anchors now follow suit. "A pamphlet handed out by the City of New York tells drug users how to do drugs safely. Wow! Now does it tell you that shooting heroin is still illegal? Hoo boy." So not only is this lame, it ruins the real entertainment of seeing all the big fat baby mommas and little grandma-cartin' old-bags that comment on the news. For the record, while less than one percent white (I'm assuming white people would rather risk fines than go to jury duty in the Bronx), I've always been impressed by conversations I've had in the Bronx jury room. While many of the folks there lack any sort of formal education, I feel they generally know what's up and I feel like I'm on the same side of most of their fences, which is good because I live on the same side too.

So for three days I had to watch (well, I was reading a book and trying to juggle my laptop, but CNN was unavoidable up there on every pillar in the room), the same news stories over and over again. Most were about the health reform bill and about this woman who had a still-born infant who they managed to resuscitate on Christmas Eve. For some reason, the women around me needed to react to this story every twenty minutes, even though they just finished talking about it seven or eight minutes before.

So I came up with some interesting ideas in how to fix some of our nation's largest economic problems.

Make black-market babies white-market babies.

Hey, in the new global economy with its just in time supply and demand, rich couples who fail at having children naturally need to stop adopting poor children from foreign countries. We have plenty of babies that could be up for sale right here, all sizes shapes and colors. Since abortion rights are being squelched anyway, lets give these folks some incentives to buy something American for a change. Sure they may make 'em better in subcontinents but who do you want for a kid? The one who almost made your sneakers or the one that almost stole them? The rich get less inbred, a new baby can possibly save that balloon mortgage from becoming a foreclosure, and everybody wins. See www.craigslist.org/babysale.

Up expectations on chain gangs.

Another touchy subject is how prison labor takes away so many jobs from poor Americans. I think to offset this and get our economy growing we need to not only prosecute white collar criminals more, but put them to work wreaking havoc on other countries. Think of the amount of talent the government can accrue setting up a dirty dozen every week or so and giving them an objective to sabotage and steal back the billions of American dollars being smuggled, counterfeited and laundered into the worlds black markets, give time-served incentives on every billion they knock off the national debt or packs of smokes and medical grade cocaine.

Make the state system more competitive.

After dumping so much federal aid last year, it's time to figure out exciting ways to cut spending this year. We should have a binary system for one year, the money switch gets turned on all year or off for only half of the country depending on how your state scores. Your schools suck, cancer and obesity rates high, unemployment and poverty not kept under the national median? You get nothing. People will be forced to make do with what they have or move to a state that has done a better job. If I lived in a shit state and lost my home anyway, I'd be less unhappy about the idea.

Revisit Secession.

Sure, economically secession of southern states didn't work 150 years ago, but there may be a chance it will now. See 3.

Sell out.

Hey, if politics can be seen as just doing business, why don't we just start a bidding war between China, India and Europe to buy us outright? Sure, this will probably suck for a while, but it's going to suck anyway. We may as well give corrupt and lazy politicians from half a world away a shot at fixing us. Maybe this would be the sort of thing where the US can start a revolution and then start over better than ever.

I hope I inspired all of the over-eighteen non-felons in the audience to look forward to jury duty, it feels really good to be a citizen.

I'll make sure I stay away from televisions for the next four years, thank you for your time.

I will give you a five abbreviated word response from my PDA phone. bill@candids.com

A word of warning to all readers out there. Always make a backup copy. This week my computer would no longer turn on, and I found myself frantically searching external hard drives and other computers for backup copies of recordings, artwork, and writing, while at the same time waiting to see if my main hard drive could be rescued. Truly a wonderful feeling, let me tell you. As it turned out I did have backups of every record currently being worked on (I dump finished stuff to DVD and external hard drive), except two personal projects. My distress lessened, and eventually despite the death of the computer's motherboard, it was revealed that my hard drive was perfectly intact, and all files were extracted. Nevertheless, an important

reminder that it makes sense to keep at least an unmixed backup copy of whatever you're working on. If you're working on tape and have the money to make an extra copy seriously it could end up being worth the trouble.

Ah, but at least for now everything is safe, and I'm now recovering from this traumatic surprise. I spent my holidays quietly, enjoying repeat screenings of *Conan The Barbarian* and spoonfuls of figgy pudding, while plugging away at several unmixed sessions. Gee, what a surprise, one was of a grindcore band, or if you like "power violence." Before I get into that I hope everyone has by now checked out the LOW THREAT PROFILE 7" on DEEP SIX RECORDS. Absolutely first rate thrashing from three PV all stars: Andy Beatie (NO COMMENT, MITB), Matt Domino (INFEST, NEANDERTHAL), and Bob himself of Deep Six Records (also of LACK OF INTEREST of course). Eleven songs in like five minutes of awesome (old) CAP CAS/INFEST/NO COMMENT sounding riffs. What I like to refer to as "that good shit."

So like I said, been mixing these "power violence" tracks (and boy has it been a fucking pain) and also flipping through the *Trapped In A Scene: UK HC* '85-'89 book I got for Christmas and reliving the horror of HERESY's *Face Up To It*, a botched recording and mix if ever there was one. Anyhow, all that's kind of had me marinating on the recording of extremely fast tunes and the different methods. Aside from the usual choices of tone and feeling that anyone has to make in the studio, music that has excessively brutal properties has the added problem that basically, the faster you go, the more clarity you lose. Kind of a no-brainer, and also kind of funny to have to sit down and think analytically about like... the mix on the TERRORIZER LP (yes, there's only one, I don't accept that reunion LP fallacy), but here we are. This *is* happening.

So the way I see it, there's a few different routes you can go with this stuff in terms of mixing. I find it to be a bit of a delicate balancing act, too much control and you enter what I call the CGI effect where it stops sounding like a real band playing real music. Kinda like when you're watching a shit kicking action movie and it's really obvious that something on screen was made on a computer (like an eleven foot tall bat monster) because it doesn't move or look like an object would in the real world. If you listen to some of these over processed modern grind albums, the amount of clarity and control in the sounds is so completely ridiculous. Even with the best sound man and equipment, no band could ever have this kind of clarity live, and for the most part you're working to recreate a live experience on a record, even if it's just "this is what they sound like playing live in a dirty basement."

On the flipside, if shit gets too blown out and fucked up, you can easily end up with something that just sounds like a vacuum cleaner and a constant wash of cymbals. If you're playing in MINCH this may be what you want (well, not exactly, but close—*respect!*) but if you're using conventional instrumentation, it may not be quite right.

It's up to you to decide what sounds right. The more you hear in terms of listening to records, the more you can hone in on the differences between one recording and another, and the more you can form a picture in your mind of what sounds right to your brain and ears.

Below I've tried to outline a few different starting points for these sounds.

1) Everything in a fucking blender:

Key examples: CROSSED OUT/M.I.T.B. split 7" (both sides); HERESY *Never Healed* flexi (much more raging than the LP!)...

These sorts of recordings I can only describe as not giving a fuck. Not that the band didn't care how they sounded, or that the person recording them wasn't working to capture their sound in an accurate way, but the conventions of normal recordings are often tossed to the side in favor of maximum noise and distortion. The guitars are usually blending with the bass pretty evenly, and they may lack definition because they've been pushed into the red. The drums tend to peak pretty hard as well, usually with the cymbals having a lot of presence, but with the snare and kick sometimes getting lost during blasting sections because of all the noise. Vocals have more distortion layered on and are usually on the same level as the guitars. Not particularly clear or audible.

2) Band shredding in a room:

Key examples: REPULSION's *Horrified* LP; NO COMMENT's *Downsided* EP; INFEST's *Mankind*.

So these recordings are still relatively dirty, but they basically just capture the band as you'd hear them live in their element, they're a notch more controlled than the previous section. The drums are more fleshed out with a clear snare, kick drum that has some presence, and mics on each tom, although sometimes these may get lost during blasting or fast transitions. All of the drums sound natural with only a little bit of compression added. One or two tracks of guitar that sit pretty even with the bass (although the bass is rather loud on the *Repulsion* LP), and it has a pretty close mic'd sound, no echo or layering of tracks. The vocals are direct and up front. No major effects, maybe a little reverb, but fairly straight forward. At times the guitar may get overpowered by a blast beat, or the other way around, but this can happen in a live setting and so a lot of times the best thing to do is just let it happen. If you're really losing something a lot you may need to adjust your mix or EQ, but part of having a natural "in a room" sound is letting some imperfection show through. You don't hear every kick drum hit at the same volume cutting through the entire mix on *Downsided* but there's no question the recording is perfect and when played against live recordings of NO COMMENT it's obviously a faithful reproduction of who the band was when they played out.

3) Controlled Chaos.

Key examples: NAPALM DEATH's *Scum*, DESPISE YOU's *West Side Horizons* (first half); INFEST's *No Man's Slave*.

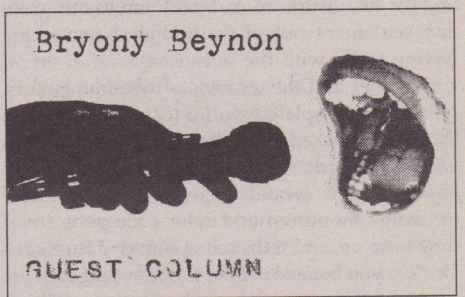
The big thing with this stuff is a bit of studio magic is used to even out the craziness of the drums and guitars and make them a bit more clear than they actually are. On the early NAPALM records, and many other Britcore recordings (like basically every Peel session) there's a very compressed tight kick drum sound that cuts through all of the other sounds, this became really common in the '90s on Grind and Death Metal records some bands even taped coins to the kick drum beaters to emphasize it more. The snare is mic'd both from above, and on the bottom with the bottom mic sometimes up really high. On side B of *Scum*, this aspect is extremely noticeable during the blasts. It makes the snare always audible, but it also gives it a very unnatural and artificial sound during some sections. It's up to you to decide what sounds OK and how much artificiality you want to blend in. For the most part these records still have all the real drums but they may be heavily compressed or EQ'd. There's nothing wrong with some studio magic and you can definitely find a middle ground. Guitars on some of these recordings may be a little more processed or layers, but not necessarily. *No Man's Slave*, as far as I can tell just has one very loud and heavy guitar track. The guitars tend to be a little more metallic though, maybe a little more scooped sounding on these kind of records, and some of them do use several layers. Vocals start to get more layered with more effects here too and may sit louder in the mix closer to a metal record maybe.

4) Air-tight

Key examples: TERRORIZER's *World Downfall*, CARCASS' *Symphonies Of Sickness*, BRUTAL TRUTH's *Extreme Conditions*.

This is when bands start adding in samples and mixing them with the drums, layering lots of guitars and adding some echo to make them sound even bigger, and vocals that are pretty loud on top of the music. Sometimes it works just fine. *World Downfall*, despite having a stiff triggered sounding kick drum is a pretty good sounding album. On the other hand, despite being fucking sick, *Extreme Conditions* is a pretty rigid lifeless recording. At this point you're in modern metal territory. Everything will be clear and smooth and discernible, but probably also sterile and kind of uninteresting. If you find yourself in this territory, well... proceed with caution.

Anyway, that's the longest I've written in a while, and I did it all without a proper word-processing program. 'Til next month.



1) The beard in my life and I took a trip to Berlin last week, we have never been so cold before or indeed since...the last time I was in Berlin. Minus thirteen. That's intense when you come from a country that empties its collective bowel (its up to you to pick a county to defile at this point by

implying that THAT VERY ONE is the bowel in question) at the sign of some frost. Said Bearded boy's eponymous facial accessory was all crunchy from icey spit. But hey, warm hearted folk more than made up for it, we shared a living room with sociopathic house rabbit named pok. carried on my irrational obsession with photographing every holiday meal I eat, and this time we ate a whole lot of them. The city is beyond good for vegan options - particular recommendations are Yoyo world in Friedrichshain (hawaiian pizza!) and Vux cafe in Neukolln, for all your Brazilian-inspired cake and bagel needs - with insane things like guava jam in them. No meat, no dairy, no fucking about. Too tasty. Seek them out, and go buy records from Bis Auf's Messer, I got the Anals 7" and moreover, really like the sensation of browsing records in someone's front room, complete with huge cellar door that nearly claimed my young life due to overzealous tape browsing. Thanks Emma and Joe!

2) I was trying to think of musical commonalities shared by most people I know (I work a job that involves lots of staring at walls) and my main conclusion was that I seriously don't feel like I know a lot of folk who aren't dealing with a sliding scale of general obsession with Eddy Current Suppression Ring. Testament to this is my having to buy up all four copies of the Goner repress of the first LP when it showed up briefly in Rough Trade East, even at £16 each. Whether it's a kind of long term slow burn every-evening-after-work record or sudden infatuation (see the song "Precious Rose") for you, I heartily recommend you join us. I recently read that the singer is also a well-known graffiti writer and gallery-showing-type artist as well, and an animist, which I think is something weird about spirits, as if their whole mystique even needed any further propping up. They've got me wearing weird gloves at all the most inappropriate moments. At least I can now take comfort knowing I'm not the only one that finds myself howling in a frankly un-PC approximation of that nasal bogan-baiting drawl "I deserve, my dessert, uh uh ughhhh, cool ice cream!" On a Melbourne-related note, can someone please make sure that MV and Steve, both sizeable chunks of my life-support system that have just upped and moved to your city (in a funny repeat of when my parents did the exact same thing five years ago, thanks life!) are both being looked after, oh and get them to buy me a Diamond Sea record? All I see are heavy skies. YES!

3) Bear with me here as I know this sounds like I need a slap and a quick listen to the Cro-Mags (this is normally true regardless), but Tunisian yé-yé music is actually incredible. Nothing more-so than the 1967 legit hit by a woman (although she was no doubt marketed as une petite fille) called Jacqueline Taieb, called "Seven Heures Du Matin," that has a The Who-pastiche "g.g.g..eneration" interlude that is probably the sexiest thing to be recorded in le langue d'amour since...oh no wait, Serge Gainsbourg was a total creep. I started researching yé-yé, apparently Gainsbourg was behind some of it but still, think of this as more like a Shangri-las for your younger sister, after she's been necking cough syrup and fapping furiously. Apologies if you actually have a younger sister and feel a bit weird now.

4) Guinea Kid – demo (repressed recently on Not Normal tapes) I really, really like this even though it has that slightly confused out-of-place last song thing going on that you occasionally get on demo tapes where the songwriting cohesion has fallen down and there is, in the case of this tape, a cringey breakdown half-timey bit in the last tune, that jars rather sharply with the other songs - tastefully assembled skummy hardcore with the correct amounts of both squall and scree that requires. I have to say I kind of like that the icky tune is on there, though, because it lends an (I'm cringing at myself here) authenticity that gets me thinking (probably totally inaccurate) they maybe have a longhaired drummer to appease, that is still way into sports metal or something. And that's cool. Anyway, Guinea Kid may be way overhyped by now, but fucked if I knew that—I stumbled upon this and would recommend checking it out. In an age where so many clamor to be bored of even the most unavailable punk, it's nice to hear a genuine rag bag of referents that actually rages, and is surely better than the thousands of message board derivatives with "I wanna do a band that sounds like blah blah blah-syndrome" from the usual places exercising levels of stylistic fascism that only serve counter a lot of their own potential.

5) Cold Wave the genre and Cold Cave the apparent "band." I say stem the tide of mediocrity and resist this reprehensible guff.

6) Completed an almost-sentimental-if-I-wasn't-so-happy-about-it bank transfer last month, in that I drip fed my last pound of the Queen's money (well, mine...) into the nefarious and frankly parasitic legion of shit hawks that make up the buy-to-let property market in this country, and paid my last month's rent to a private landlord. I've just moved into one of eight houses that are part of a housing cooperative in North London, a fact that I still can't quite believe as they are by no means common here, and this one has an incredible history which I'm going to detail hopefully in the next *Modern Hate Vibe* by interviewing my housemate, a 60 year old chain-smoking lefty archaeologist that is both bang on awesome and my buddy's mum. She and her pals squatted the whole block in the late '70s and has been here ever since, in spite of the wider ravages of Thatcherite reality. Speaking to longer term residents it seems maybe they feel some of the realities of cooperative living can themselves be less than golden, but I'm really hoping I can bring some idealism-borne-of-ignorance to the equation and maybe help spark a little progress where it's needed. Exciting times!

7) I'm off to cement my simultaneous statuses as world's coolest auntie and most chastised sister (they asked for transfer tattoos after my last visit, UH OH) by giving my four year old niece ruby her Christmas present, her first skateboard. I hope she'll thank me in twenty years time.

8) I like all music with swagger and balls, send me some at my new house and I will send you some toenails or something, possibly taped to a cassette. Modern Hate Vibe, 12 Richmond Ave, London N1 0NF UK

Thanks! bryony.beynon@gmail.com // Bryony www.bigtakeover.co.uk

BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

It's not a diatribe against the place, though I'm sure some of you will read it as such. It's simply what happened-if the adjectives offend you, ask yourself why they do, and if you have no answer just beat me up.

Alright, so last night I was tricked into going to a d-beat show at the Hazmat in Oakland, California, which in case you don't know is a deplorable burg peopled by creeps whose sole obsession is their location, and the unassailable thank-god-it's-true fact that it isn't San Francisco. I won't mine my limitless dislike of Oakland too much, (because next time I am forced to go there for some inevitably shitty event I'll have some cocksuck beard-type yelling in my ear "Go buhbuhbuhback to Suhsuhsuhan-Fran-cisco!"), but I feel safe laying into the Hazmat. Lord knows they deserve it after all I've given them and all they've taken from me.

You see, a couple of years back Scott Moore and yours truly were standing around blank in the cavernous back room of this stuffy Oakland warehouse, chatting, when I noticed a baby. (I'm not entirely convinced baby is the most appropriate word—it wasn't exactly an infant, though I was fairly sure it wasn't able to read yet. Certainly it didn't have the mental capacity to realize the direness of it's situation {I say "it" because it's most likely dead by now}, though apparently neither did I). Yes, right there in front of us was a baby, a real-live child ensconced in the firm and unloving embrace of a bizarre looking sub-literate mid-teen crust-queen. Now, before we delve into the grim tableau ahead, you must understand that even I, a genuine leather lad who revels in base turpitude and enjoys finger-banging, was appalled at the poor decision being made by this young woman. The place was unusually crowded, and every sixteen year old in the room had three smokes in the mouth and two in the nose. I, a smoker at the time, found breathing difficult, so that baby must have felt like shit. Honestly and simply, I value life to an often-undeserved generous extent, and heart-breaking as this may be to some of the more Exploited-type readers out there (surely gasping on your/their toilets at this moment), I felt a strong compulsion to remedy this child's situation, as it quite plainly could not. I approached the baby-holder calmly and honestly pretty politely, and asked her if the Hazmat at midnight might not be the most appropriate place for such a person as her pint-sized companion?

To which she replied: "I'm babysitting."

And then, "Fuck off."

So fuck off I did, perhaps damning the child

to a fate far worse than the cold kiss of an early death, a destiny worse than the lack of one, a life lived far more horrible than one taken: that of an Oakland Crust Baby. God help the child, and I hope he doesn't rot too horribly in whatever shallow grave I assume he now lies in.

I must admit I thought little of the incident in the following months. A good friend of mine who's known for poor decisions made quite a bit of love (both Greek and Roman) to the Babysitter, and he'd delight in torturing me with tales of their sordid nights. I admit I may have made some statements regarding her lifestyle to this friend of mine, but nothing particularly harmful nor out of line.

Cut forward to last year, six months after the incident with the baby. I found myself once more kicking my feet at the Hazmat, accompanied by a good looking girl from my English class, who I had newfound romantic love-dove feelings for. She was a novice at the punk thing, which wasn't really her thing at all but all girls love pop and for some bizarre reason, famed jackoff Nobunny was slated to shit out some tunes at the Hazmat. So there I was standing there making useless talk with her and her female companion, when what happens but up sidles The Babysitter. The girls excuse themselves, the Babysitter steps on my feet. I can see she's quite drunk. I gulp and she lights a cigarette, blowing smoke in my face.

"You hate me." she said, though that's not quite how she pronounced it.

I sigh and say, "Listen, I don't hate you. Let's just leave each other alone. We obviously aren't going to be friends so let's just leave each other alone, OK?"

She seems to mull this over, boiling it in her neck and straining it through her colander brain, letting the water leak out her ears. Her cigarette is burned to the butt, down to her knuckle. She puffs it once more and breaths plastic and paper into my face, then extends her hand in what appears to be a gesture of truce. I shake it hesitantly; she exits clumsily.

Nobunny starts and I enjoy it (listen, I'll digress, but only for a second. Nobunny's LP, his only so far, is a goddam great record, and I am under absolutely no obligation to say this. Throw away your Warkrime records, melt your '80s Hardcore Brace Belden action figure, blow me), until I feel a tap on my shoulder. I turn around and am eye-to-eye with the ugliest son of a bitch crust orc I've seen in my life. The band is still playing, so to make himself heard he leans in close, his teeth falling all over me, his nose leaking spange-snot, his stubble (all twenty years of it) brushing my ear in a move that'd be erotic if I was attracted to men as well as mentally challenged.

"You touched her ass!" He makes a grabbing motion with the hand not squeezing my shoulder, "And titties!" with that he releases my shoulder and makes a breast-squeezing motion with both hands. It looks almost comic and certainly grotesque; I nearly laughed before I realized these people haven't the capacity for humor. This man was serious. I see a certain Babysitter over his shoulder, smiling an evil, sharp smile. He points his finger and tells me that I've been talking shit, which (judging by his shrill tone) seems to be the major crime I've committed.

Listen, guys, I know I can be a jerk sometimes. I admit I sometimes make somewhat rash decisions, especially if I'm drunk, and always if I've ingested certain personality-altering narcotics. I also love girls. I've made numerous poor decisions while inebriated involving women. None of them, however, have involved molesting a girl, which is a charge I take pretty seriously, no matter how much I may seem to joke around sometimes. It goes without saying that even a "sketchy" guy like myself is appalled by the thought of real-deal rape. I run my mouth more than most, true, and I have certain strong opinions, which aren't always shared by my fellows. This, I admit. Accusations of molestation, though, are another thing entirely, and make me sick to my stomach. It's fine if you think I'm a piece of shit, but this charge was an accusation I was ill prepared for.

I ask him what the hell he's talking about. He offers no explanation besides grabbing my arm, and telling me to "Get the fuck of here, you fucking molester." Insanity. I'm escorted out by three Crustlord types, with the residents of the house and their dirty comrades throwing bottles at my back as I go. Not one of my few friends at the show has seen what's happened, so I end up waiting around the corner for the girl from my class, as she has no idea how to get back to BART when I'm suddenly confronted by a fuckin' legless mutant.

"Get the fuck out of here!" he yells at me. He's cocky, knowing his pals are just a yell away. Thinking I wouldn't hit a cripple.

"Are you trying to kick me out?" No reaction; Too subtle, perhaps.

"You fucking hipster, go back to San Francisco." he grumbles, looking up at me from his shit-soaked chair. Looked like a mixture between a 'Nam vet and a Holocaust victim. Pitiful and hateful.

"Aw you ain't got a leg to stand on." I spit back. That did the trick. His jaundiced eyes widen and he rolls off. I spend a few minutes wondering how he gets up the stairs inside.

The show ends a few short minutes later. The first person out the door is Justin, the No Bunny himself. He and I being on friendly terms, strike up a conversation and I explain to him my dilemma. A small crowd gathers to hear my tale of woe, (I'm quite loud), until I'm quite rudely interrupted by the Babysitter and her female companion, a nerdy looking type. Babysitter snarls out some slurs, insinuating that I'm either a homosexual or a cigarette in England (you can never be too sure with these intellectual types), then utters something that even now burns my face, boils my blood.

She says, (can you believe it?), "Look what I did."

OH! And her cackle stills makes me shudder. I fume and yell, pace and pontificated. I'm interrupted when a mohawked cretin runs up from the crust fortress across the street.

"Brace, you better get the fuck out of Oakland if you know what's good for you. This is my fucking town." I point out to him that this was most certainly not his town, besides I was well in the process of leaving it anyways and also hadn't I been to his parents two story house in the sleepy wine country town of Sonoma not three years ago? I believe his mother made us chicken nuggets, and he played Half-Life while I took a shower. I told him to take a hike, and much to my surprise, he did.

I bid farewell to the No Bunny, flipped the bird to the Babysitter, gathered up the girls I was taking BART with, and set off for the station. All of a sudden, my friend Adam comes careening around the corner yelling, "RUN! RUN! RUN!" I look back and see a sight that will forever be burned into my retinas: Fifteen unwashed unshaven unhealthy subhumans sprinting top speed in my direction, hot stupid hate burning in their usually dimmed eyes. There were skinheads with septum piercings and *Nightmare Before Christmas* tattoos. There were buttflap dreadheads. There were muffintopped hair girls and even, rolling behind the pack and towards me in an inexorable push, my legless wheelchaired foe from earlier. It was like that one "Destroy" t-shirt expanded upon and out for blood. My blood.

The girls took off in one direction, Adam and I in the other, with these smelly scumbags in hot pursuit. Between wheezes I cursed my lazy fat belly and my clickclack Beatle boots, but pressed onwards in that silent head-throbbing adrenaline sprint. A quick look back showed they were gaining, and fast. I thought of running into traffic, getting in a strangers car, but this was Oakland and there is no traffic, no escape. These psychotics were going to tear me apart, that much I knew for certain. When one accepts their fate and gives body and mind over to Certain Doom, a strange calmness can wash over him or her, an almost euphoric sense of closure. I must report that I felt no such sensation, only abject fear at the sick things these social deviants would do to me. Perhaps they'd been studying up on certain passages from Leviticus and eye-for-an-eye molest me, before of subjecting me to the rack and thumbscrews and other horrible dark devices left alone since the Spanish Inquiry. The only thing I knew for certain was that these people were absolutely insane.

A car horn, a loud honk, a friendly face and I'm in the car, speeding away from the bastards behind. No Bunny was driving. He said he saw them chasing me and saw he had to rescue me. My god. Rescued. What is this goddam world coming to? I wondered aloud. He belches. I'm deposited at a nearby BART station, (though a different one than I'd normally use, in order to thwart any plans my attackers had of ambushing me and electrocuting me in some sort of third rail train station assault), and I wipe my brow. I find I'm shaking with anger. But the station is empty and my poor legs are tired, so I sit.

I sat and sat and sat, with the train coming in twenty, then fifteen, ten, nine, eight… A helluva wait, let me tell you, for a guy like me. I sweat and I pace and I spit on the ground, ears pricked in anticipation of the heavy thump footsteps of

the mob-mad punks ready to jackboot me back into whatever hipster hole I crawled out of (for the record, Marin). The thing that really got me, though, was that they weren't really wrong. I mean yeah they were definitely wrong about me grabbing some weird crust girl's boobs, but if the situation were reversed I'd no doubt have acted similarly. I've since returned to the Hazmat, and while my relationship with this sect isn't the best, at least these bizarre accusations have been redacted and I can go see terrible bands again.

I'm supposed to meet up with Dave Fox, a friend of mine and a pleasant guy to hang around on an off night. I decide a good remedy for my awful day would be guzzling beer in an alleyway. Oh but of course while I'm in line to buy the beer, an old hoary cracked-skin lady crackhead reaches into my pocket and grabs the five dollar bill within, the only money I have. I get her by the wrist and am wrestling with her for the money when a tall skateboard type pushes me with his board. With a smirk on his face he says he saw what happened, that I should let her keep the money. While I turn to deal with him she runs off. Dave pays for my beer, and I ask the skateboarder what the hell all that was about. He says that I'm a fucking pussy who got punked.

True enough. I make threatening motions which are interrupted by his skateboard cronies surrounding me, boards raised high to heaven, so god dammit I just had to leave, letting the pricks win once again. Dave and I retreat to a nearby alleyway, cracking our tallcans, swearing and sighing. Within minutes we're surrounded by three oversized White Goons who were more than happy to point out the correlation between wearing tight pants and homosexuality. I think it was when one of them, the biggest, reached over and grabbed my ass that I looked up at the goddam sky and I swear I saw God looking down at me. And, swear on my soul, he spit.

mariam bastani

I have been in San Francisco a little under a month and have already been to six shows. I didn't expect them to be much like the shows in Chicago, where they are primarily all-ages and in the basement or in a backyard in the summer. Out of my first SF shows, one was in a living room at Thrillhouse that was the shit, a few were at an all-ages space that is primarily an art gallery, and one was at a bar. The crowds here are very distinct from one another and you can tell who goes to bar shows and who doesn't. This bar show was on a Thursday, a four-band line-up with one band whose name is in Spanish. Being new in town, I don't know many people there, so I kinda hung back and checked out the scenery. I was having a drink and walked over to some dudes I knew during what looked like a lull in their conversation. These three dudes were talking about music (what else?) when the one guy I didn't know says something like, "You know, I keep hearing about all these Latino bands that sing in Spanish that rip, but most of them don't."

Nobody responds to the comment, except, of course, me: "You mean, you think people are into them only because they sing in Spanish…"

"Yeah, like that's what makes them good." I don't want to be presumptuous, but the dude saying this is white. The two guys I know in the conversation are also white and they know that I am a woman of color, automatically putting me in the reactionary role in the minds of many of my white brothers and sisters. I can imagine them saying in their heads, "I am not touching this conversation with a ten-foot fucking pole…" and they are silent. Thanks guys, but being put in this scenario many times before, I think I can handle it, haha…

My response was, I thought, diplomatic: "Yeah, you can't expect a band to be good solely based on the language they use, but Spanish-language bands are still unfortunately sort of an oddity enough to get people curious, like with Japanese bands or bands with women in them. Personally, as a Latino and Spanish speaker, I definitely want to support and see what other Latinos are doing in the punk scene. Plus, Spanish changes the sound of the music so I would say it's better to go check it out at the risk of going to a crappy show, cuz it could be awesome." Dude shrugs and the other two shrink uncomfortably. Dude doesn't care nor did he hear anything I just said, and I really wonder if he would be saying that shit about bands from other countries, or at least the countries that are already respected in the punk scene. So fuck this dude. I know he is coming from a totally different angle than I am, so instead of calling him a clown, I instead say, "What I am saying is that by checking out these bands, you might learn something…"

The next band was just about to play and I was at the bar getting my last drink of the evening. I got a spot near the front of the band, and I know right away that this was the "Spanish-speaking band." To my recollection, the singer said a few words in English then started speaking in Spanish, saying thanks to the touring band and the bands that had played before. I was looking at the crowd and the white dude I had just talked to yells out "What?"

I can try to describe what my feeling was at that moment, but I don't think it would really do much good. Maybe I felt some of the hurt from shitty self-esteem and culture-bashing situations from when I was a kid, or maybe I felt the rage-fuelled violence that I often succumbed to when I was a teenager, but what came out was a laugh, a head shake and the thought, "Fucking typical."

I feel like this question of language never comes up with other bands because they are speaking the language of their country of origin, but since these particular Latino bands are seemingly from the United States, the choice to speak Spanish, whether it's more comfortable for them or not, is always called into question. It's as if, in the eyes of some white American punks, there is a level of authenticity that is not there since the Latino punks in question are from the US. I can tell you right now that that shit is racist. Some Latino people here who speak English are not *from* here. Also, some of these people live in communities or grew up in families whose primary language is Spanish. I grew up with parents whose common language was their second language: English. I learned to navigate their accents and emerged as a fluent Spanish and English speaker (unfortunately, I can't speak Persian/Farsi, my father's language). I feel comfortable speaking both languages and do not feel as if either one lacks authenticity. The choice to speak Spanish here sometimes is a political/social move that will either ally you or set you apart, but that is our choice.

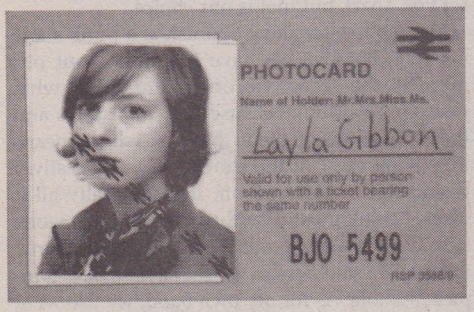
Sometimes speaking Spanish at a punk show happens because we have to think about our place in the scene; we often care about what white punks think because they are punks and there are more of them than us, which means they book most of the shows, etc… Honestly, I would rather piss you off, if that's really all it takes. I think most would agree that if someone kicked my ass at a punk show for speaking only in Spanish, said person would have to be a complete asshole. As for my own band, we use what ammo we can; meaning that if I know it's pissing you off that you can't understand what I am saying, I will probably keep doing it. My buddy who is in an all-Latino punk band said that on tour in the US, he has spoken Spanish during a show that was mostly white in order to speak to the very few Latinos in the crowd and "in protest" to the lack of diversity within a line-up or show, but at hometown shows he would speak English or bilingually because he knew that there would be other brown people in the crowd. One of my best friends is a linguist; I emailed her the next day about this show, and she told me that what I was talking about is "what we linguistical nerds call Domain. As a bilingual speaker you have the resources to use both languages, but by choosing to use the language that most will not understand, you are asserting something."

So really the question is, who is asserting what? Who is bringing the fight? Who is right? I think in this situation, more apt questions would be: What language is the language of punk? Who does punk really belong to? These are difficult questions, but in this case, you all should look at the I'm-so-tough-in-crowd asshole who ruined it for the rest of you by highlighting his ignorance and, in turn, the crowds. The fact that the "What?" dude didn't specify the cities in which these Latino bands who sing in Spanish are from, or the style (crust, hardcore, etc…) played by these Latino bands who sing in Spanish, lets me know that whenever he hears any of these bands, he doesn't hear punk, he hears Spanish. Think about it—if a fellow punk makes you uncomfortable by speaking in Spanish, who the fuck are you?

The band began to play and, to be honest, I wasn't really into the music. I was dog-sitting and had to cut out a few songs in to check on the

pup in my charge. Before I left, I tried to find the dude that had such a strong opinion, but he was nowhere to be found. I saw one of my new friends who had been present and shied away in the conversation. "Hey, man," I told him, "tell your friend he needs to learn how to speak Spanish."

My buddy replied, "I don't think that's what he meant," and he turned away. The music was deafening, the frontman still spoke between every song exclusively in Spanish, and I was already half in the Bag. To no one in particular, I said out loud in Spanish knowing no one would understand me, "I know what he meant and he should learn how to speak Spanish." I turned away from the crowd and headed out into the night.



We put this magazine together as the *MRR* house was being worked on—the mortar between the bricks is slowly seeping out, then the water heater broke. Cissie packed up her things to move to Portland whilst training Mariam who just got here from Chicago. Diane's band, Opt Out, with shitworkers Robert Collins, Dan Goetz and Trash recorded a demo. People leaving, things falling apart, bands recording, epic changes and endless disasters. We have been listening to *Lullabies Make the Brain Grow, Feel the Darkness, Killed by Death #3* and *Electrify Me* on repeat, caffeinating our brains to full capacity and attempting to get shit done without letting the chaos that currently surrounds us overtake us…

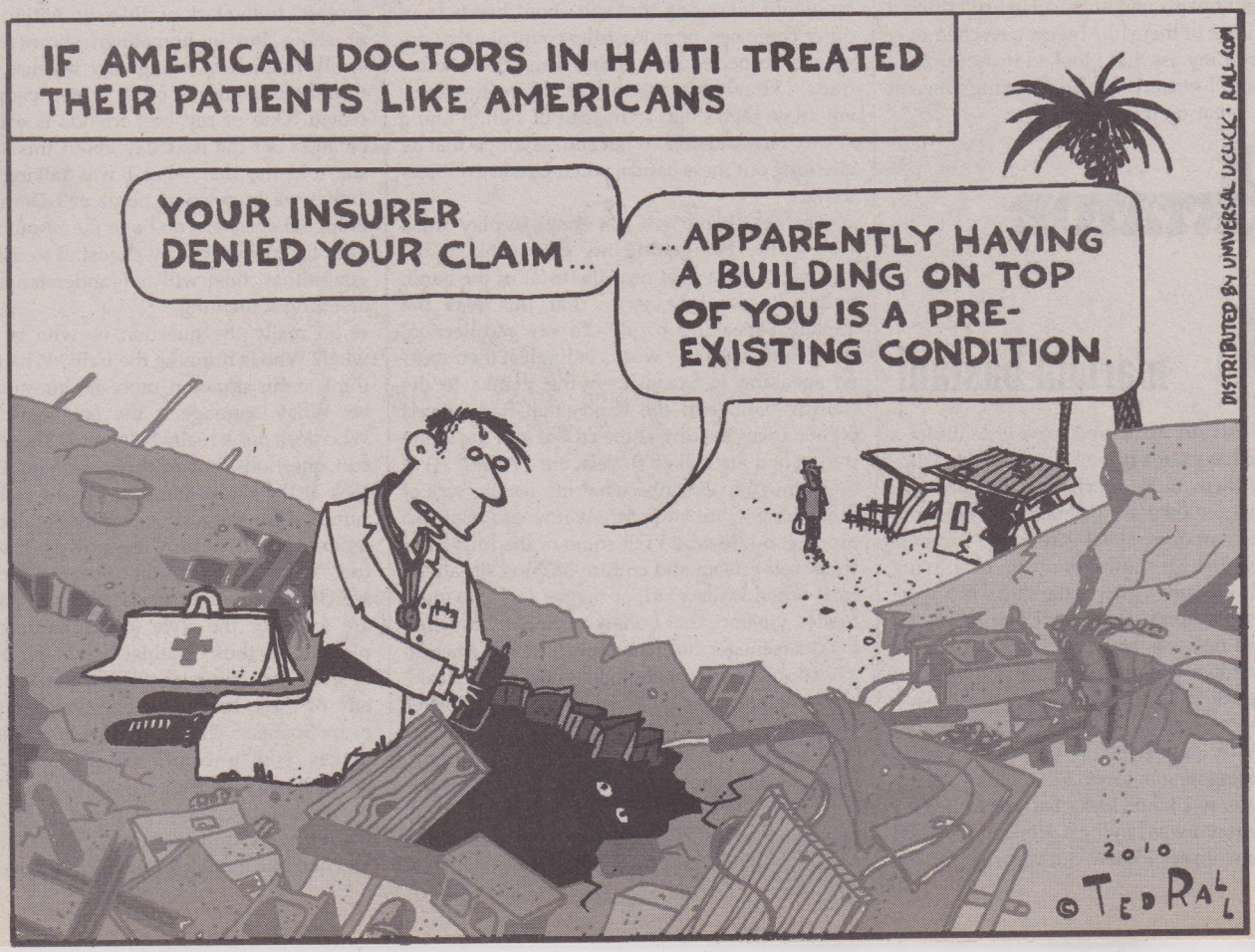
It's hard to understand or explain the amount of work that this job entails until you actually have to do it. I have been working on the magazine since '03, but I had no idea how much work my friends who were coordinators did until suddenly I sat surrounded by green taped records, at 3am realizing our sales taxes were due tomorrow, the layout I was working on just crashed, the roof above the coordinator desk is leaking and no one's picked up mail for a week… Sometimes we sit from morning coffee until long after the rest of the world has gone to sleep, forgetting to eat, working on this thing. The stress of not knowing if we are going to make rent, all adding to the dreamy and endless interpersonal conflicts that arise in an all volunteer punk live/work environment…

Making this thing you hold in your hands is one of the most satisfying yet also the most difficult and most frustrating things I have ever done. Getting to interview people that I respect, from Raymond Pettibon to Sharon Cheslow, figuring out who we should interview when we did the Film Issue, working with punks all over the world to make our culture what it is. All of this shit is transformative, but as insinuated above, it's also absolutely exhausting. Cissie is leaving San Francisco, and *Maximum* for Portland, and I will miss her tireless work ethic, her insanely extensive musical knowledge, her sense of humor and the hours of working together to put out the magazine every month. Her band, Vaccuum, with three shitwôrkers (yep you guessed it—Robert Collins plays in this one too, along with Vinnie Larussa and Daiki) played their last show, and made a demo last week. (It's reviewed in the demo section—send off for it punx!) The show was nearly all shitworker bands, and watching Tim Brooks yell at little Phil from the audience, while his band Airfix Kits killed it on stage, while Bruce Roehrs actually stayed for all the bands that played, reminded me why I love doing this shit. A random collection of people who have incredibly different political views, musical tastes, ways of operating that can somehow work together for no reward other than making punk happen and, you know, this magazine happen.

Tuberculosis / Rayos X / Poliskitzo / Des Madres El Crisis at Balazo. Tuberculosis' first song, which I think you can watch on the LA Raw Ponx MySpace—the whole show is up there—was one of the most incrdible inspiring things I have seen so far this year. As was Opt Out / Jump Off a Building / Duck and Cover at Thrillhouse. The punk community here can feel super alienating and disparate, but at these two shows I felt like something was happening, something worth participating in...

Sort of a random column this month, written in chaos, panic and disorder.Anyway as always I am here:layla@maximumrocknroll.com

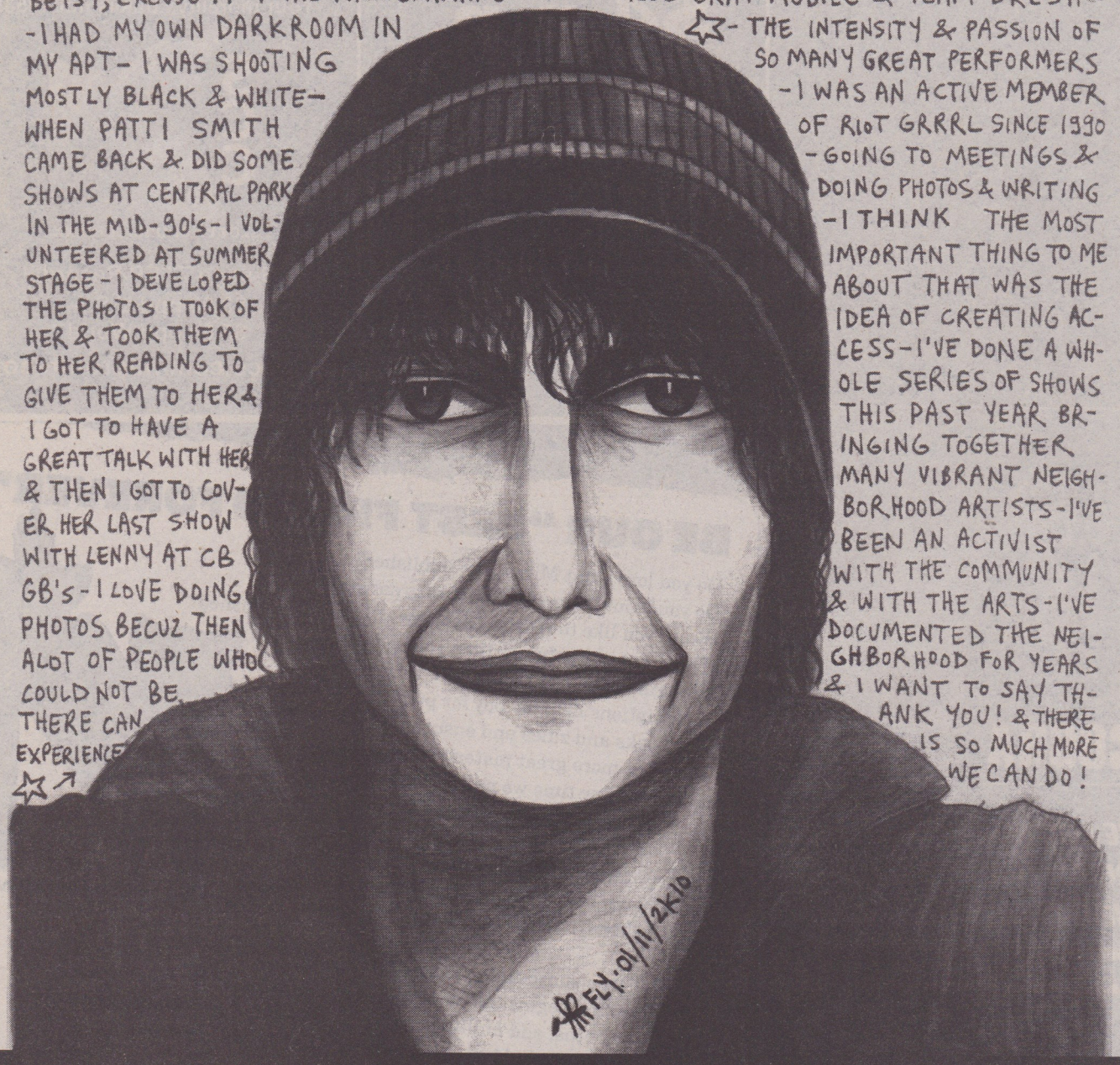
whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com



WHEN I WAS YOUNGER MY FAMILY LIVED IN THE LOWER EAST SIDE - I WAS 4 OR 5-ISH - MY DAD WAS A SEMI-PRO BASE BALL COACH SO WE MOVED TO LOTS OF DIFFERENT PLACES & EVENTUALLY ENDED UP IN NORTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA - LUCKILY I GOT INTO AN ART SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM WHEN I WAS ABOUT 16 - THE FIRST ONE WAS IN NYC IN THE 80's - I HAD TO CRASH IN MY STUDIO - THEN I WAS UP-STATE AT SUNY BINGHAMTON & CORNELL - I DID A RESIDENCEY WITH JOHNSTON MUSEUM & ROBERTSON CENTER FOR THE ARTS & SCIENCES - I WAS DOING PAINTING & DRAWING & PHOTOGRAPHY & I MANAGED A DARKROOM FOR A WHILE - I HAD BEEN COMING BACK & FORTH ALOT TO NYC & THEN I JUST DECIDED TO MOVE BACK TO THE CITY & I GOT OFFERED A JOB BY NYPIRG DOING TELEPHONE OUT REACH AS A DIRECTOR - I GOT A PLACE TO LIVE ON SUFFOLK ST. IN 1990 - & I GOT INVOLVED WITH RIOT GRRRL - BIKINI KILL, HEAVENS TO BETSY, EXCUSE 17 - I WAS PHOTOGRAPHING THEM - ALSO BRAT MOBILE & TEAM DRESH - - I HAD MY OWN DARKROOM IN MY APT - I WAS SHOOTING MOSTLY BLACK & WHITE - WHEN PATTI SMITH CAME BACK & DID SOME SHOWS AT CENTRAL PARK IN THE MID-90's - I VOLUNTEERED AT SUMMER STAGE - I DEVELOPED THE PHOTOS I TOOK OF HER & TOOK THEM TO HER READING TO GIVE THEM TO HER & I GOT TO HAVE A GREAT TALK WITH HER & THEN I GOT TO COVER HER LAST SHOW WITH LENNY AT CB GB's - I LOVE DOING PHOTOS BECUZ THEN ALOT OF PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT BE THERE CAN EXPERIENCE

☆ - THE INTENSITY & PASSION OF SO MANY GREAT PERFORMERS - I WAS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF RIOT GRRRL SINCE 1990 - GOING TO MEETINGS & DOING PHOTOS & WRITING - I THINK THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO ME ABOUT THAT WAS THE IDEA OF CREATING ACCESS - I'VE DONE A WHOLE SERIES OF SHOWS THIS PAST YEAR BRINGING TOGETHER MANY VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOOD ARTISTS - I'VE BEEN AN ACTIVIST WITH THE COMMUNITY & WITH THE ARTS - I'VE DOCUMENTED THE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR YEARS & I WANT TO SAY THANK YOU! & THERE IS SO MUCH MORE WE CAN DO!

☆↗



SHELL SHEDDY - 01/11/10 - LOWER EAST SIDE NYC

SHELL IS A LONGTIME LES COMMUNITY ARTIST, ACTIVIST, PHOTOGRAPHER & CURATOR...CREATIVEDIR OF LES ARCHIVES - THIS PAST FALL SHE CURATED A SERIES OF SHOWS AT THE TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK LIBRARY (MENAGERIE & GRAF) HIGHLIGHTING LOCAL ARTISTS (SOME PEOPS WERE INCLUDED IN THAT SHOW) - IT WAS ONE OF THE FUNNEST OPENINGS I HAVE EVER GONE TO - SHELL ALSO PUT UP A SHOW OF MANY OF HER AMAZING PHOTOS OF NEIGHBORHOOD PEOPLE - YOU CAN CONTACT HER THRU: SHELLYPHOTO@HOTMAIL.COM - HER UPCOMING SHOWS INCLUDE "SHOTS FROM BROWNIES: '90S-NOW," "MENAGERIE; CREATIVE EXPRESSION OF THE LES, PART II," "GRAF: READING THE WRITING ON THE WALL, PART II"...ETC - TO CONTACT FLY TRY FLY@PEOPS.ORG OR FLY@BWAY.NET (PUT *MRR* IN THE SUBJECT) FOR SNAIL: FLY PO BOX 1318 COOPER STN NYC NY 10276 - (I LOVE SNAILS!) - FOR FLY ZINES (*PEOPS* & *DOG DAYZ*) GO TO MICROCOSMPUBLISHING.COM - *PEOPS* #5 COMING THIS MARCH!!

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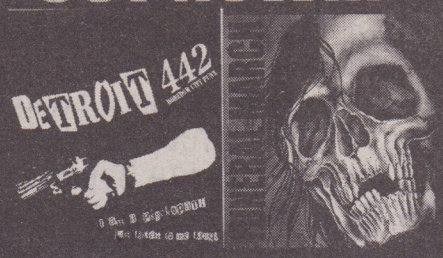

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NEWS

MRR NEWS COMPILED BY LAYLA GIBBON

JAY REATARD 1980-2010

By Eric Friedl/Photos Mark Murrman

A lot of people have asked about what was said at Jay's funeral, and what went on. Chris Davis from the Memphis Flyer luckily had the guts to take a picture of Jay's Flying V guitar that hung on the wall behind the casket. I couldn't do it. He also recorded and transcribed some of what was said.

This is what I had written down, which might or might not be what I said. I felt like I was about to collapse the entire time.

Jay's family had put together nice photomontages that ran on screens in the entrance and in the main room- pictures of Jay with friends, on the beach in Sardinia, playing music, goofing off. Album covers and candid shots. I don't think I'd ever seen the original picture that was used for the cover of the *Grown Up, Fucked Up* album. Jay's music played on a loop that got more surreal the more times you heard it. Jay lay in the open casket and people came up and paid their respects. His teenage sister Gara stayed by his side a large amount of the time. Framed pictures, posters, and albums were assembled around the room. On the wall behind him was his Flying V. People sat in the pews, talked quietly, stared silently, cried. His mother and father and sisters talked to the people who came for the funeral of this wayward, wild kid whose life had been ruled by music and his own crazy dreams and crazy energy. There were Memphis friends, ex-girlfriends, ex-bandmates, record label folks, out of town folks from bands, old friends and a couple of young kids in leather jackets who I hope just snuck down to the ceremony cause Jay was the shit. Saturday was supposed to be just a visitation, but with the assembled group and the thick sadness in the air, Jay's family recognized that this was the time for people to talk. So they found a wireless mic, turned down the music for a minute, and let us say something about our friend.

Anyway, here's what I had written, adjusted to be closer to what I think I actually said.

First of all, the Flying V is badass. Jay would have loved that. Wednesday afternoon, a friend of mine, Jay's roommate Jeffrey Novak burst into the Goner Records Store.
"Turn off the music!" he yelled at us. "Turn off the music." He was white as a sheet.
What? Me and John Hoppe were listening to a goofball band called Drunks With Guns.

"Jay's dead."

What? We turned off the music.

And with that, the music was turned off.

While I was trying to figure out what to say here today, I looked at the internet to try to get inspiration. Turns out there's all sorts of things on the internet about Jay, if you didn't already know. Reading random posts helped me think about how people outside of our circle of friends and bands thought about Jay. For example, Heads Will Roll said "But really. this guy knew how to jam and make infectious songs with good vibes. He had a pretty cool story too. You're the man, Jay"

Okay. But then there's this: Sergioacuevas says: "For the two years I know about him I have looked up to him for inspiration. Being fourteen doesn't let me do much in my time, so everyday I got up and told myself I would be more like Jay Reatard and use my time making music. I gave up time on drums to learn guitar just to be that much more like him. Once I got into painting a couple of months ago, I painted him as my first portrait and still use his music as inspiration while painting. Over all this one man has had more of an impact on me than anything else I can even remember. I have never been to any of his concerts, and I have never seen him in person. But I know he was a good guy, and even though he's not with us anymore, trying to be like him just means more to me now. Rest In Peace Jimmy Lee Lindsey Jr. aka my hero Jay Reatard." I think that's pretty cool.

I met Jay when he was fifteen. He sent me a letter saying, "Send me something," written in pencil. Signed Jay X. I think I sent him a sticker from my record label, Goner. He was impressed. Later I received a cassette with something like fifteen songs. Hand-drawn cover. I was amazed. I had been playing with the Oblivians, and we were playing some kinda mutant, angry punk rock blues thing. Listening to Jay's tape, I could hear that Jay, at fifteen years old, had already absorbed what we were doing and adapted it to his own chaotic teenage life. The fact that he used buckets in his bedroom instead of drums just seemed fitting. It was literally trash rock.

We took four songs off his tape and that was his first record. I loved it, he loved it. I think at that time he realized that he could do this, and this was really all he wanted to do. We did a full-length album, *Teenage Hate*.

Then came so many bands... The Reatards, Lost Sounds, Angry Angles, Nervous Patterns, Terrorvisions, Final Solutions, Bad Times, and many more. He released 22 full albums and had over 100 releases. He played over one thousand shows in over 20 countries around the world. All from a kid from a crappy part of Memphis. All by himself. He was fearless, relentless, and awe-inspiring. He was a force of nature. He could be a pain in the ass. He was my friend.

People have asked me if there were any signs that his death was coming, and I had to think. Jimmy renamed himself Jay Reatard. I run a label called Goner. Looking at most of his lyrics, they are filled with death, disaster, and anger. But to me, Goner is not a prediction, it is a condition. "Reatard" is what Jay was branded by his schoolmates from acting out in class. We work against these words, fight for our success despite the situation. Jay never meant for this to happen. He was always moving forward, always looking forward. One of my last conversations with him was about him planning his 30th birthday party May 1st. He wanted to fly in one of his favorite bands, The Verlaines from New Zealand. After making music for so long, he was still a music fan. Touring allowed him to meet some of the people he admired. He got to go to New Zealand to meet with Chris Knox, one of his heroes. He took punk legend TV Smith from the Adverts on tour. He just bought a house and was building his own studio. He was looking forward to his next record, working on his website and his Shattered record label. He was full of life, and full of plans. He was so full of life that this is just impossible.

Of course, it's not impossible. Hard as it seems to believe right now. Jay will not be walking around the neighborhood, negotiating deals on his cell phone, wearing ridiculous designer t-shirts and tennis shoes from New York. He will not be releasing any more singles, albums, downloads, or skateboards. He will not be attacking out of town bands with wads of money, disco balls, and chainsaws. There will be no more internet feuds, no more ridiculous fights.

At our last Gonerfest Jay punched someone in the nose for trying to pull his shoes off while he was attacking Thee Oh Sees while they played. I had to get Jay out of there. As he let me push him towards the door he said "You can't kick me out of Gonerfest! It's like kicking Jimi Hendrix out of Woodstock!" I laughed. He promised not to cause more problems, and he didn't.

Jimmy Lee Lindsey Jr., our Jay Reatard, lives on forever in his music, our memories, and his friends and family. We are shattered. But we are enormously proud of what Jay achieved in his too short time on earth. We are enormously proud of him.

Jered Gummere from the Ponys spoke without notes, talking about how much Jay loved his phone and why Jered has a tattoo of the word "Einstein" backwards on his chest. Stephen Pope told the classic, hilarious story of how he and Jay celebrated signing to Matador with a deluxe Couple's body massage, facial, hot tub soak and pedicure, catered with Big Bufords. Zac Ives, Alix Brown, Jeffrey Novak and Chuck Vicious all contributed stories and testimonials. There was a pause, and then Jay's mother stood up.

Jay's mom was the perfect closer. She spoke in a slow, measured words, staring into the crowd. She was the mother who had lost her special child. On her worst day, she was defiant and deliberate and devastating. She exuded a strong, proud love and she had us right there with her. Jay had lived his life. He had achieved great things. She knew. We knew. The silence in the room was still there, but it was no longer the only sound. We could almost breathe. We had started to take back the situation from mere horror and disbelief, and started to move into some place where the energy had a chance to go forward instead of just staying stuck looped in sadness.

Afterwards we went home to change clothes, and to get ready to see our friends' bands at the Hi Tone, Missing Monuments and The Tearjerkers. Jack Oblivian and King Louie Bankston, leaders of the last two bands of the night, were good friends with Jay, had both been in bands with Jay. The Oblivians played an unannounced set. It was an extremely drunk Oblivians show. Will it be the last Oblivians show? It would be fitting, in that it was terrible. But it was for Jay and his friends. It was all right.

Sunday was even harder than Saturday. The minister, as is usual, didn't always get all the details right. He tried, and we knew this ceremony was more for Jay's family, but it was tough to sit through. Willie Nelson's "You Were Always On My Mind" is a fine song, and Jay might not have hated it, but it sure would have sounded better to hear some music connected to Jay. Playing Elvis at the end was too much. Anyway, I got up, paraphrased what we had said the day before at the visitation, and read Sergio's email again, which to me said so much about how far Jay's influence reached. At some point the minister came up behind me while I was still speaking. I didn't know if he was trying to give me comfort or the hook. While I spoke I was wondering if I was going to have to fight the man to stay up there to say what I wanted to say. He let me finish.

After the minister stopped speaking, Ryan Rousseau, Zac Ives, Louie Bankston, Stephen Pope, Jeffrey Novak, Jered Gummere and I carried the casket to the hearse. The casket was first class, heavy, and the metalwork on the side looked like leopard print. Cool. We followed the hearse at three miles an hour around the cemetery. It wasn't until we had carried the coffin to the grave that we realized Jay was being buried directly next to Isaac Hayes. Amazing. They put his Flying V in the coffin with him. We had turned the volume knobs up to ten, both pickups active. In his jacket was an old Goner business card.

They lowered Jay into the ground.

A group of us left for the Buccaneer to get a drink.

RIP SANTANA JAIME "CRACK" GARCIA

Santana Jaime "Crack" Garcia left us all much too soon. He and Ruby Ruiz, his girlfriend and best friend, passed away in a terrible car accident in the early morning of December 22, 2009. They were only 22 years old. Jaime a.k.a. "Crack" was a young spirit who lived his life through music. His youthful vigor, spontaneity, and positive attitude are what will be remembered most by his friends and comrades. Born in Raymondville, Texas, his family relocated to Edinburg, Texas, where he helped start his first punk outfit 40 Oz. Fucks, and after travelling to Austin, Texas, and Las Vegas, Nevada, Crack finally came back home to settle in the Rio Grande Valley in South Texas. While here at home with us, he focused on getting his many priorities in order, and his sole purpose was to play music and his deepest commitment was to spend time with his loved ones. Crack began jamming with local hardcore band Regulate who gigged around constantly and recorded a demo. He just recently had joined Porkeria in September of 2009 and played only a handful of shows. With our too short of time together, he immediately became a great friend and brother for life. His loyalty, wit, intelligence, and charm are what made everyone around him love him so much. His genuine and sincere nature was truly one of a kind. We love you Crack and Ruby, and we will miss you forever. You are never lost because you will always be in our hearts. Nunca están perdidos, hermanos míos. Nos vemos pronto.

JUDGE RULES IN FAVOR OF WAR PROTESTERS' NECESSITY DEFENSE

From KIRO

TACOMA, Wash. A judge will allow anti-war demonstrators to use a unique defense during their trial in Tacoma. Two women were arrested and charged with civil disobedience after they used their bodies to try to block Stryker vehicles outside Fort Lewis in August 2008. The vehicles were returning from Iraq through the Port of Tacoma and were on their way to be repaired at Fort Lewis.The two women, Patricia Imani and Brianna Herrera, admit that they lay in the offramp from Interstate 5 in an effort to block the Strykers. Both women said they should be found not guilty because they had to protest and although it was illegal, it prevented a greater harm. "We have an obligation to resist, not just a right to resist. That is what these protests have been about since we started to do the human blockades against the Strykers," Imani said."People have been against this war for over eight years and the fact that people came out to resist these wars and take responsibility and stop the crimes of their government, those are the people who should be supported," Herrera said. The judge just ruled that the women will be able to use the necessity defense." That our clients did what they did to prevent the commission of a greater harm," said defense attorney Larry Hilde , referring to the Iraq War. "I think this is exciting and this enables us to show that this act of civil resistance. Breaking a lesser law is very important to uphold higher laws," Imani said. On Thursday the defense is flying in Daniel Ellsberg to testify on their behalf. During the Vietnam War, Ellsberg turned over the Pentagon Papers to the New York Times. It was technically illegal, but the act of civil resistance turned public sentiment against the war." It's very important for the anti-war movement, it's very important for justice," Hilde said. The deputy prosecutor did not want to comment.

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- COUGH - "SIGILLUM LUCIFERI" LP
- TOURNAMENT-"YEARS OLD" CD/LP (LP-180 gram w/digital download)
- INFERNAL STRONGHOLD- "GODLESS NOISE" LP

FALL 2009/OUT NOW/OUT SOON
- CANNABIS CORPSE- "BLUNTED AT BIRTH" 12" (2nd press)
- INTER ARMA-"S/T" 12" LP (w/ Mirror Universe)
- BALACLAVA-"SHAME" 7"
- BASTARD SAPLING/INFERNAL STRONGHOLD split 7" (w/ Tension Head Records)
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WINTER 2009/2010
- THE WAYWARD- 7"
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MRR asks YOU:

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

This month's question: What do you predict will happen in 2010?
(asked at the Max Levine Ensemble show at Gilman and a birthday rager)

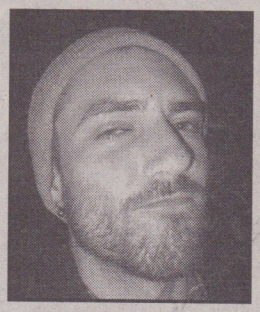
Danielle, 23, Portland
My life will either stay rad or crash and burn,

Christine, 22, Washington DC
The year 2009 was officially the year of 2000-spaghetti, now that it's 2010, it's the year of 2000-vegetables. I've eaten cabbage and brussel sprouts every single day so far, I predict there will be a a lot of vegetables eaten.

Kayla, 23, Oakland
I'll be fucked up all of 2010. Fuck a job, man.

Ashley, 25, Oakland
I'm gonna piss off my neighbors enough to get kicked out of my apartment.

Ashley, 25, Oakland
We're not all gonna make it.



Steven, 27, Oakland
...

Sarah, 30, Oakland
I predict a new bumper sticker will rise to fame in 2010. The bumper sticker will read "I'll figure it out after 2012."

Crystal, 22,, Oakland
I'm not gonna get a job this year, that's gonna be my goal. Unemployment.

Jamie, 32, San Francisco
I believe I'm gonna see a number of people in their underwear this year.

Liz, 20, San Francisco
In 2010, the economy will come up a little bit, and shit will more or less stay the same because we're in a shitty state of affairs.

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Ray Suburbia here with the good word from Carbondale. I've been lazy, busy, sleepy, drunk, and too bored to write a new one of these lately. It's much easier to do drugs in the woods than bike to the library and type while weirdos jerk off using hand sanitizer next to you. But luckily for all of you I've gotten over my faux-apathy (and fear of strange semen) and have come to spread the gospel of true small town DIY punk rock.

Mother Nature and bad business acumen have worked together to close two of the three reliable show bars in town. The Hangar 9 closed because the roof collapsed under the weight of a crazy ice storm. Booby's Beergarden (which in the past had been very, very kind to the punks) ran itself into the ground. Not surprising since it was pretty much a front for an incarcerated, convicted child molester. Giving out $100 dollar guarantees every night was awesome for all of us booking and playing shows this past year, but man, was that a stupid idea for a bar to do. Unfortunately, the currently imprisoned convicted child molester owner of the place is talking about selling it to the former owners of Big Boys Q'n. Who are alleged molesters themselves. Seriously, it's like a David Lynch small town around here. There also haven't been any shows at the Big Muddy IMC space for a long while since the cops starting busting every show. We can thank the kids that fucking advertised a "rave" at the space. Once again, stupid humans ruining it all. The only upside to these closings is that more and more shows and kids have been forced to move to houses.

Along the lines of houses, Lost Cross is still going strong. We've got the new housemates John, Wally, and Shawn to thank for that. When Tim moved to Chicago to get married (and I got burnt the fuck out of living there) they stepped up, moved in and have helped keep it thriving. Shows constantly. You can get a hold of them directly through the mail (407 W. Elm, Carbondale, IL, 62901). The Swamp has been having about a million shows a week lately. They tend to have shows that lean towards the noisier/experimental/prog elements of DIY music. It's not really my scene, so I don't tend to go to a lot of their shows. But it's fucking awesome that they're giving up their house for strangers and friends. I know they have a MySpace, so you can get a hold of them there. The Skihouse has been having the odd show every now and then (maybe once every couple of months). The shows there tend to be more of an event, due to the sporadic nature. Lots of random faces. Their shows are more of the indie punk variety, and are pretty eclectic, actually. It's a great venue: huge basement with high ceilings and a great sound system. Hopefully they can have more shows regularly. The only reliable bar that does punk shows right now is PK's. They have them mostly Thursday through Saturday nights, but occasional weekday shows as well. It's nice cause it's a local townie bar that doesn't charge cover (but still pays bands), and is pretty much barren of collegiate douchebaggery. I've heard that there's a restaurant in town that's starting to do shows, but I'm not too sure what the deal is. No one I've known personally has done anything there. Maybe next time I'll have more on that.

We lost a handful of bands with Hateful Tim moving up north. LICK MY BUTT AND BALLS disappeared, as did THE DAMMIT BOYS. And who knows how many bands could've started if only that drummer didn't move. (INTERJECTION #1: If you're a drummer, *move to Carbondale*. I will straight up promise you that you'll be in a band within a month. Hell, if you move here and cite this as your reason why, I'll start a band with you). GOD'S ON SAFARI broke up a little while back. They were probably the most interesting band in town with their KING CRIMSON meets MELVINS meets, I dunno, NAKED CITY style of prog-punk. I know they recorded a handful of songs. Hopefully they'll have an official release. The WOODBOX GANG broke up because their singer got busted for running a small scale pyramid/ponzi scheme and now has to go to prison. Someone tell Jello to forward his Alternative Tentacles royalty checks to the people he ripped off. This also broke up The FAMILY STUMP, a roots rock group who also featured Mortimor Bustos (ex-BOURBON KNIGHTS, FIGHTING 407, etc) and Greg Edwards (ex-the same bands as Mort). Coincidentally, Mort is moving away from Southern Illinois. After around a decade of breaking laws, strings, and boundaries in town, it looks like he's heading southbound to Austin. Good luck to him. The scene definitely wouldn't be the same without him. LEADERS didn't make it too long as a band. Oh well. And the only spastic hardcore band in town, DADDY'S LITTLE GIRL, broke up.

Conversely, there were a couple of notable reunions as of late. SPOKESMEN have gotten back together as a full-time operation. Their old bass player moved to Seattle to make movies, so now the ubiquitous David Allen has filled in on four string duties. They've been playing out a bit, and I hear may be working on some new material. But, by far, the coolest reunion these past few months was the DIET CHRIST reunion. The DIET CHRIST guys were who pretty much started the Carbondale D.I.Y. punk scene back in the mid-'80s. They had a really great 7" on

DADDY'S LITTLE GIRL

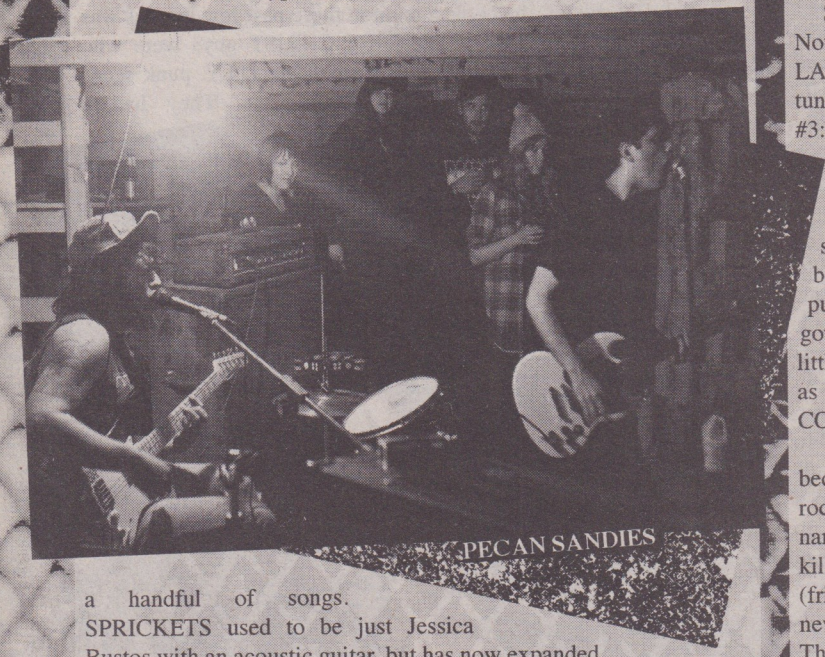
CONNIPTION FITTS

Mystic Records that came out in '89-'90? They also started Lost Cross. So the importance of this band to this town cannot be overstated. They did two shows (with every single member, ever!) over Fourth of July weekend; one, fittingly, at Lost Cross and one at PK's.

The band blew everyone away. *Everyone*. It was possibly one of the best sets of fucked up Midwest hardcore I have ever seen. Not only did they come out, but it was a Carbondale punk reunion. At one point there were well over a dozen ex-Lost Crossers in the basement; pretty much a direct lineage of people living there from 1986 all way to 2009. Unfortunately, a few months after the show, guitarist (and man who helped get the reunion together) Bill Hartley died from heart complications. I only met him the weekend of the show, but man, was that dude solid. I'm glad he got the chance to see how much his accomplishments meant to so many people so many years after the fact. How all that he helped do, without thinking of posterity or the future, affected so many people's lives. We can only be so lucky.

Another person that passed away, and is greatly missed was Erik "Big Country" Crews. Erik was one of the most amazing people to ever live. He put in his time in such great hardcore bands as 99 STABWOUNDS, GOOD + GAME, VENGER, and THIS GUY. He was the living embodiment of 618 posi-core. His death was quite a shock, as he was surprisingly diagnosed with cancer and succumbed to it within months. He loved hardcore, punk rock, and Lost Cross more than most people I've ever met; he always had a beer for you, and was supportive of everything you tried to create. Big Country R.I.P.

But looking forward, there are a handful of really amazing new bands in town right now. PARLOR is a three-piece that plays a really cool atmospheric type of garage punk. They've already recorded a handful of songs.



SPRICKETS used to be just Jessica Bustos with an acoustic guitar, but has now expanded to being a full-fledged band. They've got a sound that would put them nicely on a split with GRASS WIDOW (if only they knew who GRASS WIDOW was). In the disastrous wake of trying to do a serious band like LEADERS, Nick O'Neal and I decided to do a fun two-piece stompy garage rock band by the name of the PECAN SANDIES. And in true fashion to many of the bands that Nick and I do, we have not recorded a single note or played a single show outside a three block radius of Lost Cross. Hopefully (meh...how about "maybe"), that'll change. But who knows. There's also a brand new hardcore band, NOT HEALTHY, that just played their first show. Seems like the band went over well. And that's something this town could use a lot more of—hardcore. (Interjection #2: Hey Hardcore Harry/Harriet, bring your band through here on tour! The kids fucking need to know! Plus: we're much more fun than St. Louis!) BIG CITY DEER ATTACK is a punk rock band with a little of a pop-punk touch to them. It's the first band Tilley (ex-BOURBON KNIGHTS, WHISTLE PIGS) has fronted in Carbondale and she can seriously wail. The songs are good but the shows kinda suck. Hopefully it'll get better. And the last new band I can think of is SLOWPOKE. Remember the '90s college bands like POLVO? Well, they're kinda like that. I like them, but they're definitely not "punk" sounding at all. But in a town like this, who the fuck cares? We're all in it together.

SHITHAWK has proved to be a rousing garage rock time. Not long after adding third member Brett (COPYIGHTS/DEAR LANDLORD) on keyboards they recorded a CD–EP of great original tunes. I just wished they would play more around town. (Interjection #3: Next time, don't ask a dude who tours fourteen months a year to join your band) I mean Brett's super busy. There're those COPYRIGHTS split 7"s that have been coming out, that DEAR LANDLORD LP. And let's not forget his painting. Moving on, but still keeping in the High Street family, LOS OJOS ROJOS have been continuing to be one of the best heavy bands in town. They put out a demo that I lost a little while back, but luckily they've got a full length coming out really soon. They're starting to get a little less stoner rock and more aggressive post-punk. But they're just as fucking loud, especially with new third guitarist Funberg (of the COPYRIGHTS) who replaced Mort.

TWEAK BIRD is now a Carbondale band (again?). These guys became part of that whole BIG BUSINESS/MELVINS stoner-punk/rock scene when they moved to LA few years ago, changed their name from CASH GAL, turned into a two-piece, and starting writing killer fucking songs. Ashton moved back a few months back and (frighteningly) quickly started hanging out at The Cross and starting new bands. He's 1/3 of PARLOR. Anyway, TWEAK BIRD rules. They've got a couple of 7"s and a 12" and a split 7" with IT BURNS coming out beginning of 2010. They did a North American/Canadian tour opening for TOOL (?!), and did a European tour as well. They've also recently added a third member, John McCowan (ex-THE HELL, GOD'S ON SAFARI) on saxophones. Check them out if you like anything remotely MELVINS-esque.

With yet another name change, JOSH PLEMON AND THE LONESOME DRIFTERS has now become the SWAMP TIGERS. They still play straight ahead classic country/rockabilly/Texas swing. All the name changes over the years (the LONESOME 4, etc) have been weird, but I do think it's pretty rad that they finally have a band

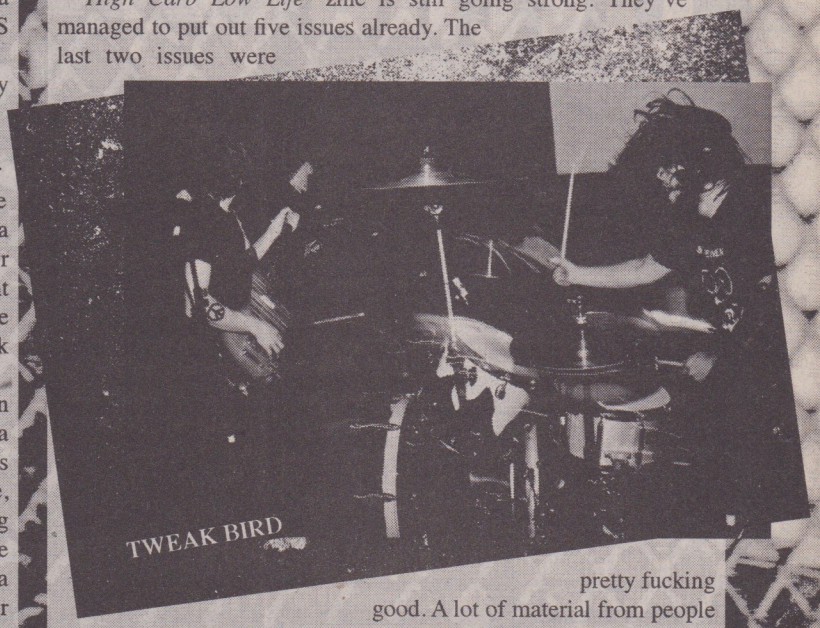
name that doesn't have Josh's name in it. BROKEN BRICKS are great punk rock'n'roll band. Good riff heavy, beer friendly band that fits in well with locals IT BURNS and THE CONNIPTION FITTS. Speaking of the latter, they haven't been all too active as of late. With two fifths of the band living on the other side of the state, they've only played a handful of shows in the past few months. But don't worry, they're still a band. They've been sitting on a couple songs for a split 7" that didn't work out. Now turning toward the former—IT BURNS has been sporadically active lately. The aforementioned split with TWEAK BIRD was recorded, along with two songs to be on a four-way band Let's Pretend/A.D.D. Records split with THE SASS DRAGONS, SHANG-A-LANG, and TOO MANY DAVES.

The NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE really needs to not just lay waste at shows but record some new stuff. I don't think they've released anything since 2005. Maybe when they do they can throw a record release party like the one the WHISTLE PIGS did. After two years of playing every Tuesday at PK's, Carbondale's favorite house band (sorry BOURBON KNIGHTS, you broke up), put out a full length CD themselves. And you know what they did to show their love of their fans? They made the first 150 drinks at the bar the night of the release show free. They took their $150 pay, and just had the bar keep it so as to pass it to whoever came to their show on $1 drink night. Pretty fucking rad, if you ask me.

NIGHTY NIGHT have proven to be the great DIY indie band in town this past year. They put out a 7" on Let's Pretend Records, did a West Coast tour and are doing a Southeastern one as well. Their songs seem to be getting a bit more twee, more indie, and less aggressive, but in no way less good. The BLACK FORTYS have been playing out now and then, doing some sporadic shows and weekenders. Same with SECONDARY MODERN who also found time to put out a CD and do an East Coast tour over the summer. I'm stoked that Carbondale bands are finally going on more and more tours. It seemed that a few years back, only a couple bands ever played shows outside of the Carbondale/St. Louis/Chicago axis. But now you have people going all over. GORILLA HERITAGE is about to head out on a Midwest tour as well. They went on a summer hiatus, got back together, worked on new songs (recorded some, I think), and are now about to hit the road. I'm glad to see some Carbondale noise-punk getting out there. (Interjection #4: I wonder who's gonna be in charge of the shows at The Swamp while they're out of town...)

THESE MAGNIFICENT TAPEWORMS put out an album earlier this year, and went on tour. It's nice that with the DAMMIT BOYS being gone there is still a surf-garage band in town. Dan from the TAPEWORMS is starting up a new label named What's For Breakfast. The first release is going to be a split 7" between Milwaukee's TRUTHDEALER and HEAD ON ELECTRIC. (Interjection #5: Everyone knows that Carbondale loves Milwaukee!) HIMALAYAS are still banging out their burly post-punk, just not as frequently anymore. They're another band I'd like to hear some new songs from. And YOUNG LOVES were a band I was just starting to get into over the summer, but haven't really heard much about them in the past few months. Fuck, maybe I should start going to more indie shows in town. I'm losing my fucking cred here! At least I can tell you that SKINNY JIM & THE NUMBER 9 BLACKTOPS are getting big ... in Europe. They went to Europe earlier this year, and now are heading back to Germany. I guess rockabilly is played out in Southern Illinois, but not in the Old World.

High Carb Low Life 'zine is still going strong. They've managed to put out five issues already. The last two issues were pretty fucking good. A lot of material from people involved in the scene who aren't just musicians. I'm not exactly sure how to get a hold of Tracy or Rick (who co-edit the zine) via real world mail, but you can via highcarblowlife@gmail.com. Good articles and great art. Babie Mecca is a local blog that just started up recently. There's not much to it right now, but I'm sure it'll get better as it goes on. Right now it's mostly show updates, with the occasional video and review. Still, check it out at babiemecca.blogspot.com.



Well, I guess that's pretty much all there is to say about this little town in the middle of nowhere. When it's not so cold out, I'll take you swimming and then to The Dragon Wizard park. Maybe we can ride bikes to the abandoned insane asylum. Or hit up the taqueria in Cobden that *easily* beats your favorite. (Interjection #6: No. Really. I don't care if you live in either the Mission or San Diego. Taqueria Pequena dominates all.) But as a young Nicky Hangaround once summarized, "nothing to do but hang around with you," so get a hold of me, if you want. I've got the time. Love,

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YOUNG LIVERS

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"In the Offing" LP/CD

SMALL-BROWN-BIKE
"Composite, Volume One" 7"

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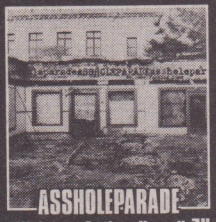
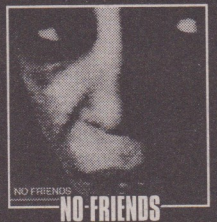
& RELIGIOUS AS FUCK LP

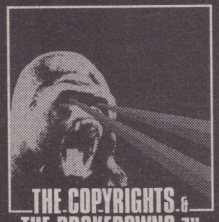
THE-BOMB
"Speed is Everything" LP/CD



ASSHOLEPARADE
"Welcome Fuckng Home" 7"



NO-FRIENDS
LP/CD



THE-COPYRIGHTS-&
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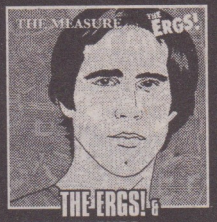

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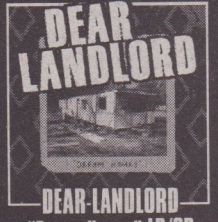

DEAR-LANDLORD
"Dream Homes" LP/CD

THE-MARKED-MEN-&
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MRR Year-End

2009

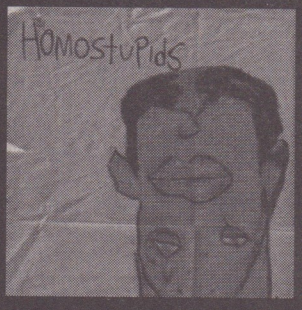
2009

Top Tens

DX

TOP TEN LPS OF 2009

While last year I took a patriotic stance and waved the flag for Australia, this year most of my favourite records were recorded under the stars and stripes, as most good rock based music has been historically. No order.



HOMOSTUPIDS – "The Load" LP (Load)

Another round of hits from America's most hardcore, *The Load* features a nice array of BUTTHOLE SURFERS inspired sound manipulation of the recording, which provides a disconcerting feeling as the speed of the song wavers up and down. Like all their recordings, there is little space for anything in the mix as everything bleeds into everything, so this is their attempt to raise the eyebrows a little and induce more nausea. In my view, they have bettered their earlier efforts and offended my delicate sensibilities more.

BILLY BAO – "May 08" LP (Parts Unknown)

It was likely take time to digest the scope of this record, and I've been chewing on it slowly for some time. This is barbaric, hateful sludge, audacious in production, hysterically shallow in range, just a hopelessly congested block of filthy noise. Modern hardcore and punk bands have attempted to provide a complementary gesture to the vast history of avant-garde and experimentations with tape loops, laptop slop and hideous guitar feedback, and BILLY BAO's confident second LP is among the finest of this trend.

WASTED TIME – "Futility" LP (Grave Mistake)
GOVERNMENT WARNING "Paranoid Mess" LP (Grave Mistake / La Vida Es Un Mus)

Futility is a perfect contemporary hardcore record that skims the cream from the top of the Boston, NY and DC hardcore crop and mixes it with the cult hardcore meets '70s hard rock wisdom that Poison Idea perfected on *Feel The Darkness*. It sounds like the America that I have read about post-Obama hysteria, the streets stinking with the rotting stench of hope and change.

And, for *Paranoid* Mess, GW recruited Jack Control to master, and the guy knows Japanese hardcore, so he's given their usually stars and stripes thrashy sound a very weird feel. There's a couple of flat tunes that sound like they were written on the day, but most of the time that this record is playing I'm captivated: they can play fast punk with authority, like few bands can.

IRON AGE – "The Sleeping Eye" LP (Tee Pee / Cyclopean)

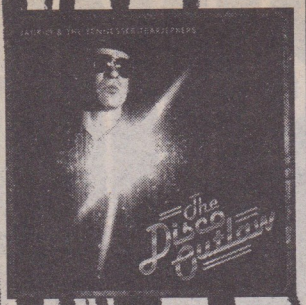
The Age Of Quarrel and *Systems Overload* and *Iron Fist* and *Kill Em All* and *Sabotage* and *Satori* and the like have been laying in the glaring heat of the Texan sun, bloated and ready to split at the seams. This is the kind of heavy metal that used to blare out of portable tape players (we didn't have ghetto blasters in the Canberra suburbs) and would coerce the kids in my neighborhood to break their bones at the local BMX track. Mean.

BLANK DOGS – "Under And Under" LP (In The Red)
MOON DUO – "Killing Time" 12" (Sacred Bones)

The critics behave like BLANK DOGS involves some kind of deceptive trickster that has pulled the wool over everyone's eyes by writing catchy tunes and producing them to sound like they're coming through the wall of your neighbors apartment. He wrote a double LP of synth punk / glue wave tunes with that flat, muted production that everyone seems to despise. I'm a hipster and a dupe: this record sounds great to me. MOON DUO, for similar reasons, offer that muted, distant sound that beckons more than deters, and these tunes offer the same hypnotic bliss that WOODEN SHJIPS master.

THE RIVAL MOB – "Raw Life" LP (Lockin' Out)

This label and the scene that surrounds this label have made a few efforts over the years, but nothing has come close to the raw power of this LP. Without a doubt the best of the NY street inspired hardcore bands in 2009, the thick hard rock production (drum sound is excellent) and unpredictable, strange song structures that groove more than thug when they get slow (more "Chunks" than any recent band of this style has managed), and a vocalist that sounds like he's troubled and frustrated more than dominative and bullyish, have made this my favourite record to listen to before performing difficult household chores like weed pulling and



shower scrubbing, and as a most impressive achievement, got me back to the gym.

DEATH *"For The Whole World To See"* LP (Drag City)
DEATH is motor city proto-punk, post-STOOGE and MC5 and Cooper, three black brothers with a tight, aggressive sound that other people have compared to BAD BRAINS. This record recalls scenes of unemployment lines, crumbling inner city streets and everything that makes the '70s American landscape and the tension of exported industry, Nixon, etc., very meaningful to the current economic and political situation. Hear this while reading *Fear And Loathing On The Campaign Trail*, OK?

SUN ARAW *Heavy Deeds* LP (Not Not Fun)
KURT VILE *The Hunchback* 12" (Richie)
SIR RICHARD BISHOP *The Freak Of Araby* LP (Drag City)
Not punk, but these were the best records that fell outside the *MRR* scope but could still do with your attention and devotion, as they are still on (ahem) "independent" labels and their tunes are timeless and monumental.

Carolyn Keddy

2009 was another great year for music. I tried to resist my usual urge to go too crazy, so here's what I came up with.

LPs

JACK-O AND THE TENNESSEE TEARJERKERS – "The Disco Outlaw" LP (Goner)
I feel kind of silly proclaiming, once again, my love for this album in the pages of this fine magazine. Yet, here I go. Third time's the charm, right? After this I will shut up about it. At least until twenty or so years down the road when I get to say told you so. I have listened to this record every day since I got a copy in April 2009. Honestly. It is just that good. Jack has such an amazing voice. The songs are catchy, lustful, and sort of heartbreaking. My favorite song is still "Sweet Thang," but I have also been edging toward "Make Your Mind Up," a half-hearted ultimatum for an indecisive girl, and "Stop Stalling," a seemingly desperate love song that may simply be about a car. It is such a fantastic album.

BASEBALL FURIES – "Throw Them To The Lions" LP (Big Neck)
Mostly, I am a girl who needs a great singer in order to fall madly in love with a band. I don't mean to insinuate anything by that statement. BASEBALL FURIES have one of the best singers in the world, but for the first time in a long time, I have fallen for the music first. Catchy, interesting, complicated, and fun riffs. I find that every time I start listening to this album, I have to stop whatever I am doing and just pay attention to the music. Then I simply think over and over again what an incredible album this is. Wow.

DADFAG – "Scenic Abuse" LP (Broken Rekids)
This album is beyond description: Arty, noisy and in your face p.u.n.k. Panicky and agitated in the way only a (mostly) female band can be. It's tormented and vexing, lustful and angry. I have yet to see DADFAG play in a traditional club. I have only seen them play at art galleries and house parties. That will probably soon change, but the impression will forever be etched in my brain—an untraditional band for a scene that has been stagnating in its predictable ways. We can always use a band that messes with our expectations and shakes us out of our stupors. Amazing.

BRILLIANT COLORS – "Introducing" LP (Slumberland)
In the last few years it seems that the all-girl bands are starting to get wimpier. The public wants pretty girls singing pretty songs prettily. Well, not me. There is still a lot for women everywhere to be pissed about. I want anthems and screaming and just plain rockin' out. Brilliant Colors deliver all that and more. Catchy, wild, fun songs that make you scream and have a great time. All the best elements of the first wave girl punk bands, yet they sound modern. Girls, look here for your inspiration.

TY SEGALL – "Lemons" LP (Goner)
Ty does it again. His second album is just as wonderful as his first—Garage rock that mixes the pretty with the noisy. The two blend nicely. My favorite song on the record "Lovely One" is simply perfect. It's one of his best.

JACUZZI BOYS – "No Seasons" LP (Florida's Dying)
I have to admit that I hate this new-fangled jangley rock. Well, most of it obviously. Jacuzzi Boys are jangley, I won't pretend they aren't, but they also write really catchy songs and the singer has a really cool voice. So in this case, the jangley stuff sounds OK with me.

THE UV RACE – LP (Aarght!)
If I put what I like about the UV RACE into writing, it just doesn't come out right. Minimalist, post-punk-ish music that sounds a bit like a lo-fi version of the POGUES. The music is accentuated by the singer's seemingly off-key, lethargic, spoken vocals. As lame as that description sounds, it really works. The songs are catchy, weird and interesting. I also really enjoy that instead of the lyrics on the insert, singer Marcus describes what each song is about. It's an amusing touch.

REIGNING SOUND – "Love & Curses" LP (In The Red)
When I listen to this album, I start to feel really bad for Greg Cartwright. He must have had his heart broken so many times, but that fortunately makes for many great songs. These are some of his best. Plus I really like the cover of "Stick Up For Me," an anthem for our times and the only song that doesn't seem to be about love gone wrong.

RATAS DEL VATICANO – "Mocosos Pateticos" LP (Siltbreeze)
Primitive punk rock from Mexico. Great rhythms, poorly recorded and so very exciting. This record has it all: Punk, garage, surf, whatever. Old school, new school, its all here and I like it—a lot.

FRANCIS HAROLD AND THE HOLOGRAMS – "Who Said These Were Happy Times" LP (Going Underground)
This is so noisy and undecipherable, then all covered in a layer of hiss. There is probably no logical reason why I like this so much, but I do. There is something strange, haunting and semi-dangerous here or maybe it is just my imagination blending with all the noise bouncing around this room. Either way I don't care. I'll just turn this up.

COATHANGERS – "Scramble" LP (Suicide Squeeze)
This is how I would imagine punk cheerleaders, if such a dumb notion ever existed. I wouldn't for the life of me want that to happen, but COATHANGERS scream, rock and seem to have so much fun that is the only way I can describe it. The big difference would be that if you ran into these women on the street, you'd probably run the other way instead of snarling at them while making some wise-ass comment about school spirit.

EPs

SCRAMS – "Flea Market Rock" EP (Scrams)
It's demented, dance-y, garage-punk with a '60s organ sound and a singer that has a kind of whiny, high-pitched voice—but in a good way. "The Molasses" cracks me up. Just the idea of creating a dance where you move slow and stick to the floor, yet it is danceable. Brilliant!

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "That Time of Day" EP (Nervous Jerk)
Isn't EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING due for a bad record? How many great ones can they keep putting out? Recorded in 2007 at the *Primary Colors* sessions, these tracks are more minimalist than the tracks on the album, but they are still catchy and fun. "Noise In My Head" has agonized vocals. I love it.

SUPER WILD HORSES – "I Was Blind" EP(Aarght!)
Thundering and noisy. Powerful with bratty female vocals, yet the songs remain very catchy. This is what I imagine the SLITS would have sounded like if they went punk instead of reggae.

CHEATER SLICKS – "Erotic Woman / Can't You Hear (My Heartbeat)" (Columbus Discount)
I don't know how the CHEATER SLICKS do it. They always create this maniacally wild garage sound, but the music remains cohesive, exciting and catchy. One original and one obscure cover on this 7", but both have that distinctive CHEATER SLICKS sound. I love it.

WHEELS ON FIRE – "Bad Lie/ Come On Judy" (Trouble In Mind)
Despite the bad band name, this is a cool record with two really good songs and catchy, punchy garage-rock with a great singer.

THE GOTHIEFS – "Hongkong Rocks/ Limited Appeal" (High School Refuse)
One half of this band is Nils Damage, formerly of one of my favorite bands, SUPERHELICOPTER. These two songs are way too short, but they are also messy, distorted, trashy garage-punk—just what I like.

USELESS EATERS – "Sucked In" EP (Goner)
Post-punk-ish and very English sounding, even though this one-man band is from Memphis—Simplistic songs done with a cool style.

WILD THING – "You're A Punk" EP (Clown College)
It's fun when the hardcore kids grow up and go garage. They play the music faster, have a lot more attitude and don't give a fuck about wearing the proper clothes. Messy, trashy, snotty and the songs are really good.

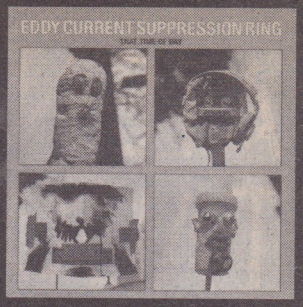
THEE OH SEES – "Tidal Wave/ Heart Sweats" (Woodsist)
Here are two amazingly catchy songs. Garage pop soaked in reverb and complimented with vocal yelps: Vivacious and ebullient.

LOVER! – "I'm Not A Gnome" (Tic Tac Totally)
Fuzzed out garage songs with high-pitched, slightly annoying vocals. It's pretty wimpy, but very charming at the same time.

CAVE WEDDINGS – "Bring Your Love/ Let's Drive" (Hozac)
The A-side is an OK garage love song, but side B-side's "Let's Drive" is such an amazing, catchy song. Part garage, part pop, part country. It's infectious.

Reissues:
AXEMEN "Big Cheap Motel" and "Scary! Part III" (Siltbreeze) plus seeing them live.
DEATH – "For The Whole World To See" (Drag City)
THE EYES – "TAQN" 10" (Artifix)
THE FEMS – "Go To A Party" EP (Drag City)
ZERO BOYS – "Vicious Circle" and "History Of" (Secretly Canadian) plus seeing them live.

2010 is off to a bad start with the loss of Jay Reatard. Farewell Jay. I'll miss you.



Steve Spinali

GROSS NEGLIGENCE – "Skate the Apocalypse" EP (Flat Black)
This San Diego band's sound may seem familiar at first, but boisterous energy combines with a dry sense of humor in this burst of thrashy fun.

FLIPPER – All Reissues (Water)
Both loved and reviled, FLIPPER was the most vocal exponent of "Pet Rock," which is to say, a mutant genre all their own. Their screeching feedback and lumbering guitar riffs can still be a revelation, especially when they're out of tune.

HAWAIIAN6 – "Bonds" LP (Ikki Not Dead)
Fans of HI-STANDARD will probably enjoy the intricate, melodic punk from this accessible Japanese outfit. At its best, this is thundering punk piled high with hooks.

NERVES – "One Way Ticket" LP (Alive)
At their best, the NERVES show how you how to execute perfect pop, without sinking into the morass of sugary instrumentals. Taut, unpretentious, and pure.

NOFX – "Coaster" LP (Fat Wreck Chords)
There have been better NOFX records, no doubt, but for consistency, songwriting, and wit, it's hard to surpass these guys when they're in a groove.

RAINCOATS – LP (Kill Rock Stars)
This much-needed repressing was received warmly on its release, but the individuality of the girls' sound makes an even deeper impression with this reissue.

SECRET PROSTITUTES – "Skandanavia '79" EP (AG82 / Cutthroat / Death Exclamations / Psychowolf)
The basic, mid-speed punk here has a rhythmic pull and almost rappish vocals that immediately grabs your attention. Enormous fun, and this gets better and better with each playing.

SUBHUMANS – "Death Was Too Kind" LP (Alternative Tentacles)
This legendary Vancouver band has assembled their early recordings so fans and collectors alike can enjoy this smart, rebellious, and sometimes satiric punk. Favorite tracks from my very favorite Canadian band.

TELEVISION PERSONALITIES – "And Don't the Kids Just Love It" LP (Fire)
While I'm partial to the band's outstanding singles, this reissue of the TVP's debut LP features evocative neo-psych with memorable hooks.

ZERO BOYS – "Vicious Circle" LP (Secretly Canadian)
This redefines one of the great high points in hardcore. It's hard to imagine you don't already own this classic; the ultra-catchy guitar riffs and concise lyrics will make you wish you were livin' in the '80s.

ATENTADO

Mariam Bastani

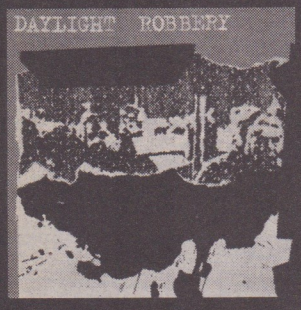
I just came on to the MRR *team about a month ago. Before then I was living in Chicago and (like many of us) didn't have the money to get a shit ton of records, but from what I have heard, here is what kicked my ass this last year in no particular order. I have also included the shows of last year, most of them in Chicago, that made my life better and brought us together.*

RATAS DEL VATICANO – "Mocosos Pateticos" LP (Siltbreeze)
This record sounds unmixed with enough high end to deafen your pets, but fuck it's good! It's all over the place. It's kinda old-school, kinda garage-y, with *Carnival of Souls* key boards and raw vocals, but mostly its four kids from Mexico that don't give a shit and want to play their version of punk. For that, I love this LP.

NEEDLES – "Desastre" EP (Lengua Armada / Bad Skulls)
Really, what can I say that hasn't already been said about this record? It makes me wanna tear my face off.

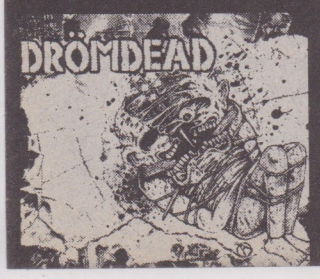
ATENTADO – "Todo Esta Oscuro" EP (Discos Enfermos / Crust as Fuck)
I realize that this record will probably be on many year-end top tens, so let's be brief… This is straight up hardcore without any I'm-jerking-off solos. It's raw with sincerely pissed female vocals. The music commands attention and makes me want to play immediately. The record is inspiring because it again proves that simple hardcore can still be killer hardcore.

NERVESKADE – "Acid Attak" EP (Whisper in Darkness)
Holy. Shit. This EP rips. The vocals are screechy and snotty, but not in that cheesy-ass punks-in-striped-shirts way. I missed them when they came to Chicago and am super bummed about it, but at least the chaotic, noisy, and blown out EP will be around to keep me company until the opportunity arises again. Get this record.



DAYLIGHT ROBBERY – "Red Tape" EP (Residue)
I saw the first show this band ever played and have loved them ever since. This EP is super catchy with male/female vocals. and melodic in the best possible way. I hear people compare them with X, but fuck that, DAYLIGHT ROBBERY is better. The B-Side of this is EP has some killer musical arrangement and awesome vocals with SIOUXSIE SIOUX moments that are so haunting that it makes your heart ache.

INTIFADA – "Sounds So Good" EP (Rompe Todo)
The shit is fast and hard. Each of these dudes is good at what they do and together they live up to the title of this EP. The music is raging hardcore that is not generic or trendy. I know the comparison to CRUDOS and SIN ORDEN is often made, but like those bands, INTIFADA has their own shit going on and fucking owns it. The vocals are raw and there are some pretty crucial breakdowns and chants. Serious hardcore that doesn't take itself too seriously, nothing could be better.



CANADIAN RIFLE – "Visibility Zero" LP (Residue / Squirrel Heart)
This is one that I will be listening to until the day I die. It is what the Midwest is all about. It's highs, high and its lows, low, but somehow hopeful all the while. It's melodic and catchy, but still gritty and dark. Lots of singers of punk bands really can't sing at all, but these dudes can belt it out, even harmonize, and still sound like they can take me in a fight without sounding like stupid macho dumbshits. *Visibility Zero* lets you enjoy the moment without forgetting or feeling guilty that the world is a fucked up place and lets you be bummed out without forgetting that the next day could be better.

PUTAS MIERDAS – "El Punk No Quiere Paz Quiere Diversion" EP (Todo Destruido)
Unfortunate name, great band. These guys are from Guadalajara ("Tu que conservas el agua del pozo / De tus mujeres lo más hermoso"), Mexico and deliver mid-tempo, ripping, and infectious tunes with an old school Spanish punk feel. With that being said, make no mistakes that this brand of punk is Mexican. They capture the best of Spanish punk and make that shit better with urgent guitar and vocals pissed enough to make you wanna smash something. This is a record you can chant, dance, fight and fuck to. Get it and do all of the above...

DRÖMDEAD – "Donde Esta Tu Dios" EP (Moo Cow)
This is Venezuelan punk that doesn't need crazy tempo to make it brutal. The original review of this is right on that it sounds like early-'80s Scandinavian hardcore, but the Spanish sung lyrics definitely add a richness that shows that these far away places produce something great in combination. Unfortunately, the guitarist, Yani, was senselessly murdered during the summer of last year. A group of punks, including Yani, were attacked by strangers and while the others survived some serious wounds, Yani did not. My heart goes out to them. This records in not on my top ten because of that reason, but I do think you should get it because, not only it is amazing, it's the sound of what punks do best, one of whom would have continued to contribute more to the punk world. *En paz descanse*. You will be missed.

DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Again, this is an LP that is probably on a bunch of top tens and, really, I can't say any more than the rest, except this is a badass record. Reverb and echoed vocals that sound like this dude eats glass. The guitars aren't over wanky and the bass is heavy enough to induce a heart attack. This is heavy with no need for speed. You'll hear some DISCHARGE, sure, but you can't stop there. These guys have their own shit going on and it is good shit at that.

I could only include ten, but:
NO SLOGAN – "Aversion Therapy" LP, VOCO PROTESTA "Vojo Al Libereco" LP, and the TUBERCULOSIS and POLISKITZO demos (Up los fukkin' ponks!)

Best Live Shows of 2009:
DISROBE and DISCHRIST at Metal Shaker (Benefit for Conrad and Vicki by the Legion of Goons and Shaman)
NUCLEAR FAMILY at the Des Plaines Project
DIENTE PERRO at C.U.N.T collective on the Fourth of July
SIN ORDEN at the annual backyard show (Shygirl/hardcore in da hood!) R.I.P.
LECHUZA and SECURICOR at Metrodome
JODA and KE CHU CHA at Death By Audio in NYC
PLF at the annual Apocalypticrust Fest
INSURGENCIA and PKDORES at Rancho Huevos for the SIN ORDEN South American tour kick off
NEGATIVE APPROACH and CHRONIC SEIZURE at Now That's Class in Cleveland.
TRAS DE NADA, everytime, anytime, all the time, and *any* show that Rick Ponce has *ever* played

Dan Goetz

Unlike 2008 where I was sort of grasping at straws to come up with ten records on any format, 2009 saw enough good records that I originally had separate lists of LPs and EPs, both of which were already narrowed down. Ultimately, I decided to do just one list of absolute favorites. Here goes.

1. BLANK STARE – LP (Third Party)
Living in the selfish, hedonistic human wasteland that is the Bay Area, bands like BLANK STARE are even more important and relevant for me than when I lived in DC. With its heavy straightedge presence, there has been many a night where I'd let BLANK STARE drown out the din of drunk human garbage "letting themselves go" and blabbing about how much they spent at the bar that night. This is one of my favorite bands of the last few years that unfortunately threw in the towel a few months ago. You will be missed.

2. VIVIAN GIRLS – "Everything Goes Wrong" LP (In The Red)
It is with great reluctance that I put this record on this list at all, let alone the number two spot. I haven't liked any of their other records, I hate that they get written up in the press by wieners who will never get their music, I hate that they were on some TV segment sponsored by Southern Comfort, and when I listen to this record I have to ignore that most of the songs are about boys. This may be my own esoteric interpretation of the music, but to me, they put forth something dreamy and transcendent— a desire to rise above the concrete jungle. To leave behind a life lived in circles and disillusionment with everything you thought you wanted out of the city. The nights spent wandering and wondering. The feeling that time is running out and you don't know where to go from here, but you want to be somewhere you can breathe. As I prepare to go traveling for a while and question whether I want to return to the Bay Area, this record couldn't have come along at a more perfect time.

3. TURBOSLUT – side of split LP with PYGMY LUSH (Exotic Fever)
I've said everything I can about this band—mysterious girl hardcore. Read the interview in issue #314 if you want to know more, or just listen to this record. My broken heart will never mend.

4. WILD THING – "You're a Punk" EP (Clown College)
The A-side of this record is what all garage punk should sound like: snotty, abrasive, dripping with attitude, and as fit for slam-dancing as it is for any other kind of dancing. Fuck a bunch of sweet diddies by and for Termbo burnouts with superiority complexes about their awful tastes. Actually, they'd probably like B-side of this record, which I don't listen to.

5. LOTUS FUCKER – LP (RSR)
This is possibly the best band playing their own take on Japanese hardcore in the US and without being metro-crust celebrities either.

6. SOCIAL CIRCKLE – LP (No Way)
Not since early CAREER SUICIDE has a band blended good hardcore and good garage punk/first wave punk so effectively.

7. CONDOMINIUM – "Barricades / Big Plans" (Fashionable Idiots)
A cool and unexpected departure from their first two 7"s. The A-side is a unique, sadistic dirgy number and B-side effectively takes influence from the mellower moments of *Slip It In*.

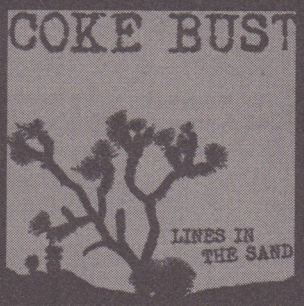
8. NOMOS – "The Most Dangerous Game" EP (Deranged)
This recording, originally their demo, was my number two favorite demo of 2008 and I'm glad it saw a proper release this year (even if it came out on an opportunistic label that advertises in *Vice*). Whenever I'm at my most pissed, I let these songs blast away my frustrations and I probably listened to this recording, in whatever form, more than any other in 2009. If I catch this band live in 2010, it will make my year.

9. COKE BUST – "Lines in the Sand" LP (Six Weeks)
After interviewing this band (also in issue #314) and reviewing this LP, I've said everything I can about this band. If you missed them on their US tour, you lose.

10. BROKEN WATER – "Boyfriend Hole" (self-released)
It's the sound of dreams coming true and falling apart at the same time.

Top ten live sets of 2009
ZERO BOYS at Gilman
CULT RITUAL at Hazmat
SEX VID at Balazo
SICK FIX in San Jose
COKE BUST in San Jose
YEAR ONE at the Long Haul
WILD THING at 25th & MLK in Oakland
JUMP OFF A BUILDING reunion in the Thrillhouse kitchen
LYBIANS in the Thrillhouse kitchen
SILENT MAJORITY at the 16th St. BART

Top five demos:
BLOODY GEARS
FOREIGN OBJECTS
SILENT MAJORITY
DEATH FIRST
ZOMBIE DOGS



Vinnie Larussa

In no particular order. Here's what I listened to or enjoyed the most during 2009.

BLACK FORK – "First Fork Years" LP (Mess Me Up)
One of the coolest bands from the East Bay in the '90s, this collects tracks from their demo, EPs, and some of their compilation appearances. Quirky punk rock done really well. Glad to hear their name resurrected.

D-CLONE / MÖRPHEME – split EP (Mouse)
Excellent pairing of two young and great bands. Seeing D-CLONE play a few months ago was mind-blowing—so loud and crazy and maniacal. Having MÖRPHEME nearby was quite the local treat.

GIANT HAYSTACKS / YOUNG OFFENDERS – split LP (625 Not So Fast)
Years in the making, glad to see this finally see the light of day. Wish we could have seen GIANT HAYSTACKS play these songs a few times. Wish YOUNG OFFENDERS would play more in general.

ILEGAL – demo cassette (self-released)
Absolutely raging demo with a KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO member. Crazy and thrashy HC that reminds me of WRETCHED. Love this thing.

DEATHTRIBE / KRIEGSHOG – split EP (In Crust We Thrash)
KRIEGSHÖG continues to be one of the best. I hope their future material (LP?!) is just as good.

LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Cataleptic Noise Contamination" tape (self-released)
Made for an Australian tour, I believe these recordings are unique to this tape. Distorted madness at its best. I must have listened to this at least 50 times.

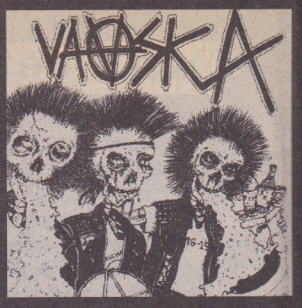
MARKED MEN / THIS IS MY FIST – split EP (No Idea)
Years in the making, glad to see this finally see the light of day. Was blown away by the MARKED MEN songs; so damn catchy and fun. The THIS IS MY FIST songs are some of their best material.

NERVESKADE – "Acid Attak" EP (Whisper in Darkness) and live
The record was really great, but seeing them live was incredible. So loud and noisy, yet so tight.

VAASKA – LP (Todo Destruido / 540)
Super catchy and heavy riffs and very chaotic. I heard a thing or two about it, but this thing really took me by surprise.

WARCRY – "10 Tracks Noise" LP and "Nausea" EP (Warcry)
One of the best bands going today. Never heard the demo until it was committed to vinyl. The EP is killer. I knew it would be one of the best of the year after the first listen.

NEEDLES – "Desastre" EP (Lengua Armada / Bad Skulls)
This is perfect.



Mark Murrman

Because it seems I live more in the past than the present, a number of reissues got me more hot and bothered than a lot of new releases. Not to say there weren't great new releases—there were, in spades. For the purpose of this list though, I'm sticking to re-living the past.

Reissues:
Sing Sing Records
Label out of New York responsible for a steady stream of legit, look-a-like repro power pop gems, all 7"s. ROSES ARE RED, the ZIPS, RUDI's *Big Time* and *I-Spy*, DE CYLINDERS…so many great records. And Sing Sing is keeping them in print. Look for lots more great reissues from Sing Sing in '10.

1977 Records
Like Sing Sing, but this label releases records in limited quantities (500) and operates from Japan, so the 7"s run about $11-12. It hurts…so good. How else are you gonna get a copy of the NUMBERS *Sunset Strip*, CELL 609, DANSETTE DAMAGE without totally breaking the bank? They started off mostly hitting a lot of the great power pop collectables like FAST CARS, INCREDIBLE KIDDA BAND, BUREAUCRATS, and have recently started hitting more of the KBD types, like CRACKED ACTOR, TITS, FILTH, etc.

MIRRORS – "Something That Would Never Do" LP (Violet Times)
Great looking, great sounding fifteen song collection of Cleveland, Ohio's MIRRORS. Midwest proto-punk at its finest. All songs from '74-'75. Essential for those who feast on the ELECTRIC EELS, ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS, and VELVET UNDERGROUND.

ZERO BOYS – "Vicious Circle" LP (Secretly Canadian)
One of the greatest punk records of all times. It's an album that needs to be kept in print and finally Family Vineyard has vowed to do just that. The companion release, *History Of*, is also a long-overdue release (collecting material from the *History Of…* cassette, among other sources), but a bit flawed in it's digital-sounding production. Seriously looking forward to the promised DOW JONES & THE INDUSTRIALS reissue LP this year.

CRUSHED BUTLER – "Uncrushed" LP (Radio Heartbeat)
Aboutfuckingtime! The Crushed Butler 10" that came out in the '90s has become nearly impossible to track down. Big, fat thanks to Radio Heartbeat for getting this JESSE HECTOR artifact back in print. "*It's My Life*!" Primal early-'70s thug rock.

DEATH – "For the Whole World to See" LP (Drag City)
Eh, there are some haters who say this reissue is all fucking hype, but Jesus Christ, do those people not have fucking ears? I mean the fact that this was done by three black dudes from Detroit in the early/mid '70s is only the icing on the cake. Solid album from start to finish that will stay in constant rotation around my place.

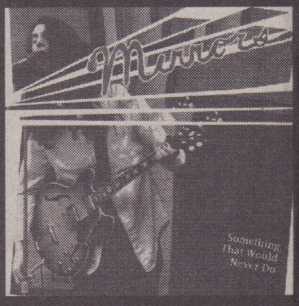
IVY GREEN – LP (bootleg)
Since there's some kinda legal issue keeping this from ever appearing in print legitimately, it kinda stuns me that the previous bootlegs haven't been kept in print by some enterprising and unscrupulous person. It's such a good record, total classic. There's a steady demand for it. A shame that it can't be released legitimately. This boot came and went, much like the bootleg version that cropped up at the beginning of the decade.

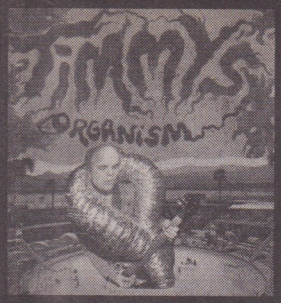
DICKS – "Kill from the Heart" LP (bootleg)
See above. Everything I wrote about the IVY GREEN boot applies to *Kill from the Heart* too. People need to get over whatever bullshit is keeping this from being properly reissued and get this out on the level.

RONDOS – "Destroy the Entertainment" 2xLP (King Kong / Red Wig)
A totally nice package: double LP, booklet, the works. I'm not even a giant RONDOS fan, but this collection of their 7"s, the *Red Attack* album, and some live tracks hits the spot. Now, I wish the EX would fucking get some of their early records back in print…

V/A – "Total Pop: Swedish DIY Punk and Mod 1979 – 1981" LP (bootleg)
Still a sucker for a good comp, even though pretty much anything can be found on some music blog dedicated to "lost," "unearthed," and "unheard" punk. The packaging is minimal, but not as shitty as the *Bloodstains Across the World* comps or stuff of that limp-dick ilk. Solid and great comp of Swedish punk that hits the poppier side.

New:
HUNCHES – "Exit Dreams" LP (In the Red)
A great swan song from one of my favorite bands of the past decade. As long and fucked up as ever…the album is solid, tweaking the formula just enough to not simply sound like more of the same, but not diverging so much as to wonder where the band we all know and love went. The real treat though was getting to see them at a house show in Sacramento on their final tour in a packed house with the MAYYORS. Such a great time…one of the best shows I saw all year.





DRUID PERFUME – "Goat Skin Glue" EP (Italy)
I love this band. I loved the PIRAHNAS and I love DRUID PERFUME for pushing the envelope in such unexpected directions. Their two new singles, just recently released, cut further into the wild frontier of punk. They *sound* like Detroit. A sleeper band…still not sure why there's not more hype around these guys.

BARRERACUDAS – "New York Honeys / Don't Get Me Wrong" (Douchemaster)
Now that the CARBONAS have done broken up and BLACK LIPS are off in the *Vice* world, there's a new breed of bands cropping up in Atlanta and, for my money, the BARRERACUDAS are the best. They aren't trying to be either of the aforementioned bands…okay, so maybe they sound a touch like GENTLEMAN JESSE, but that's an okay thing by me.

BUNDLE OF FAGS – "Art School Asshole / Attitude" (Weird Hug)
The A-side, "Art School Asshole," is such a simple, perfect song. It's everything you'd expect from a band with this name doing a song with that title. I swear to god if I had first heard this and someone told me it was from the Midwest circa 1977-79 I wouldn't have doubted them for a second. It is *that* good.

FLYIN TRICHECOS – "Tri-Tri-Tricheco" EP (Proud To Be Idiot / Distort)
Punishing punk from Cleveland. I've never seen 'em live, but from knowing Alessandro I can guess that as good as the record is, they are really a band that needs to be experienced…if you're a glutton for punishment.

PHOTOBOOTH – "Pretty Baby" EP (Raw Deluxe)
Local boys that sadly are no more. While PHOTOBOOTH's Daggerman single was pretty good, this three-song 7" captures them at their finest. I'm such a sucker for Jason Patrone's (ex-FM Knives) lyrics and singing…I'm anxious for him to get saddled up with another band.

SHIRKS – "DC Is Doomed" EP (self-released)
DC is such a fucking black hole. I can't help but think if these guys were from…well, just about anywhere else, they might get a bit more notice. Of course, their internet invisibility doesn't help either. Alec Budd from the PROBLEMATICS makes a long awaited return to music and burns it up with help from a few DC locals, though I guess Budd has lived in DC long enough to be considered a local at this point. Hopefully they'll treat us to more in '10.

TIMMY'S ORGANISM – "Squeeze the Giant" 2x7" (Sacred Bones)
A true genius and all-around awesome dude, Timmy Vulgar goes solo for this five-song double 7". Backed by the TERRIBLE TWOS on this outing, Timmy out-weirds any of his previous output in HUMAN EYE or CLONE DEFECTS. This one draws a bit more from the less-heard-of TENTACLE LIZARDO and REPTILE FORCEFIELD (another of Timmy's projects). Like the DRUID PERFUME guys, I'll lap us just about anything Timmy does like a starving mutt, because so much else of what comes out just all sounds so same-same.

WILD THING – "I'm a Punk" EP (Clown College)
MRR's own Brace Belden delivers the goods on this tight little 7" EP. No bullshit punk. I mean it's as simple as that. What more could you or would you want? The A-side is the clear winner, but WILD THING gets in touch with their sensitive sides on the B-side. They're one of the best bands going in the Bay Area. Getting to see them with the OUTDOORSMEN is always a real treat.

HEX DISPENSERS – "Winchester Mystery House" LP (Douchemaster)
Not quite as good as their first album, but a great follow-up and heads above most everything else I heard this year. It's a real go-to record. When I can't think of what else to play (and I've already been through the OOGA BOOGAS LP), I often reach for this. Simple, catchy, fast. In and out.

Justin Briggs

For the first time since I began doing shitwerk at MRR, *this is the first year-end top ten where I couldn't do a list of ten LPs and ten EPs. There were a lot of other "good" records, but not much that I'd consider "great." So here's my football picks for weeks 1-52 of 2009, in alphabetical order.*

ATENTADO – "Todo esta Oscuro" EP (Discos Enfermos)
Since there was no MEANWHILE record in '09, this Spanish band did the best DISCHARGE impression of the year. I don't intend to cheapen the greatness of this 7" with that sentence, but it is absolutely the most "DISCHARGE-informed" record on this list. I'd hope that you would understand what that means and I don't need to get into the details. I love Elsa's voice. It sounds fucking perfect with the music.

BATTLE RUINS – demo cassette (Rock'n'roll Disgrace)
The best Oi! recording of '09. There have been times where I spent the entire workday with this 14-minute recording playing on repeat and had the choruses stuck in my head for days. By the time this issue finds itself into your paws, the majority of this demo will *hopefully* be out on 7". I, personally, can't fucking wait to throw this on my best records of 2010 list 365 days from now.

DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida es un Mus)
What else can I say about this one? The best live band of the decade (surprise surprise) releases a flawless hardcore record. This is as good as it gets folks. Just fucking perfect. To be honest, I think no matter how you slice it, this record dwarfs almost every other punk or hardcore record ever released, including most of the classics. If you can't see that you're an idiot.

FRAMTID / PISSCHRIST – split EP (HG:Fact)
FRAMTID, blessed with one of the best drummers in hardcore, delivers three more tracks of Scandi-beat perfection. PISSCHRIST rounds out the rare split 7" where both bands bring it, with their three tracks of great throttling raw punk.

ILEGAL – demo cassette (self released)
The second coming of raw, manic'n'wild classic Italian-styled hardcore from these (currently residing in) Montreal goons. Thank Khrist this amazing demo is about to be followed by an absolutely incredible 7" in the next few weeks.

MORPHEME – "Ounou no Rensa" EP (Prank) and MORPHEME / D-CLONE split (Mouse)
With their run cut criminally short, the Bay Area's MÖRPHEME left a nice legacy with these two records and a slew of wild shows in their wake. A blend of a Japanese noise-cruster sound and the drawn out vowels of classic-era Finnish hardcore seemed to be the basic tools with which MÖRPHEME chiseled their nook. The D-CLONE side of the split is far from slouching either. Their shit is top-notch Dis-Bones noise-core of the highest order.

NEEDLES – "Desastre" EP (Lengua Armada / Bad Skulls)
Delivering crucial tunes for the second year in a row.

NERVESKADE – "Acid Attak" EP (Whisper in Darkness)
Irradiated hardcore for a cathode-ray generation. Ripping UK-styled noisy 'core. Great dudes, great live band, great record.

SACRED SHOCK – "You're not With Us" LP (Residue)
Have I mentioned that I love this record? I mean, Fuck, I wrote an entire, like, 800-word column about the reasons why it's a perfect record. Fucking tough as *hell* with some of the coolest guitar work in years and sounds like nothing else out there. Out there is right. Consult your back issues for more.

WASTED TIME – "Futility" LP (Grave Mistake)
Futility is trying to write a better classic American-styled hardcore LP than this. What an incredible platter. Flawless.

THE EXTRAS:
FIRMEZA 10 – "Hardcore Radikal" 12" (Self-released)
HUNCHES – "Home Alone 5" (In the Red)
WARCRY – "Nausea" EP (Warcry)

Tim Brooks

Didn't I just do this? A year goes fasssst. *So much good stuff around again. Seems that "shitgaze" is all the rage – all the garage kids are listening to lots of JESUS AND THE MARY CHAIN and shit. It's OK by me…if not terribly "punk." Some of these records made my decade top ten, which goes to show great records are still out there. A lot of these are my friend's bands, so either I'm showing favoritism or my friends are in good bands! Whatever, as I always say, music is a feeling, sometimes a good memory associated with a record changes the whole feel of it for me, so take that disclaimer however you want. Super inspiring to see so much good shit out there. No order:*

LPs:
SKIN LIKE IRON – "All Human Failings" LP (Free Cake)
It's no secret to anyone who knows me how much I love this band. One of my all time favorites, both live and on record. I loved the 10" from last year, but *All Human Failing* is next level. Super heavy caustic hardcore like SKITSYSTEM crossed with INTEGRITY and BLACK FLAG or some shit. Live they are like an enormous door slamming in the depths of hell. While music rotates on my electronic listening device, this is always on and gets played almost daily (I kid you not).

HEX DISPENSERS – "Winchester Mystery House" LP (Douchemaster)
Another one from the decade top ten. I loved this band's first LP, but *Winchester Mystery House* record blows it out of the water. It's dark and moody, yet has a pop edge. It's about songwriting, see? Hooks. *Winchester Mystery House* is always out next to the record player. It's a palate cleanser, a record for every mood. HEX DISPENSERS blaze live, and I would be happy for any of them to live in my house.

MARKED MEN – "Ghosts" LP (Dirtnap)
Said it last year, saying it again: my fave punk band of all time. MARKED MEN can do no wrong. The writing genius of Jeff and Mark backed by the solid rhythms of Mike and Jojo is unstoppable. Buzzsaw attack. Again, like the HEX DISPENSERS record it's all about the songwriting…listen close, it's not just two-minute pop gems…these songs are crafted, thought out. The MARKED MEN should be huge, unfortunately their modesty keeps them as our own secret.

JEFF THE BROTHERHOOD – "Heavy Days" LP (Infinity Cat)
So I only heard this yesterday, but it came out in 2009 so fuck y'all. Dougie told me this was going to be my new favorite band, he knows me well. They are. Mind blown. It's like a fucking stoner rock BEACH BOYS, a powerpop HAWKWIND. This fucking rules. I cannot express how good this record is. Desert island shit right here.

DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Everyone at the compound has been bleating about this band. I hate jumping on the bandwagon, but DESTINO FINAL kills it. Saw them play last year and was amazed and the LP is just as good as the live show. Fucked distorto D-beat with crazy echo vocals in Spanish. So Good.

IRON AGE – "Sleeping Eye" LP (Tee Pee/ Cyclopean)
I love metal when it's good. This is better than good… flawless even. So heavy. The record *Kill 'Em All* wished it was.

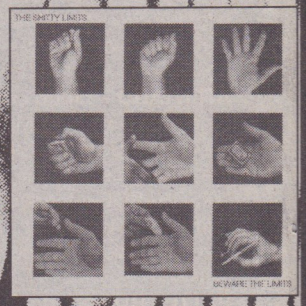
SHANNON AND THE CLAMS – "I Wanna Go Home" LP (1-2-3-4 Go!)
Another one of Dougie's recommendations. He dragged me to see them. I mean SHANNON AND the fucking CLAMS? How can that be good? Then the first note came out of Shannon's mouth. What? Fuck! This band is amazing. Like a fucked up '50s do-wop band—sultry soul but ground up with broken glass. Shannon's voice is amazing—super soulful yet husky. The soundtrack to fucked up parties, doing cheap speed, and drinking wine. The record is great, see 'em live they're even better. Shannon is such a sweetheart too!!

SACRED SHOCK – "You're Not With Us" LP (Residue)
Logan Dean Worrell, *MRR* columist and bassist of SACRED SHOCK is the champagne of people. I love the people in this band. I love this band. I remember little of Chaos in Tejas last year, although I came to at 4am in a warehouse with about 300 people watching this band fucking *destroy.* All the parts add up to a fantastic hardcore record. The fine line between noise and melody, chaos and containment. One part DISCHARGE, one part ARTICLES OF FAITH. I love this record.

SHITTY LIMITS – "Beware The Limits" LP (Sorry State / La Vida Es Un Mus)
Garage rock on speed. It has a distinct English quality that I really like. Raw, fast, and tight as fuck and the song writing is aces. Imagine if ART BRUT was hardcore, or if HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE were Brits. Missed them play 'cos I was at Legoland. Bummer. Legoland was awesome though.

WASTED TIME – "Futility" (Grave Mistake)
Head and shoulders the best band out of the No Way/ Grave Mistake stable. The reincarnation of NEGATIVE FX. Harsh depressive hardcore. WASTED TIME kills it live too.

7"s:
AIRFIX KITS – "Playing Both Sides" EP (Dirtnap)
The other one made the decade top ten, and this could have too. I'm not going to go over yet again why and how much I love this band. I just do. Choppy post punk vibes—WIRE meets SHAM 69, GANG OF FOUR meets the COCKNEY REJECTS—topped off with Allan's made up Scotts accent (sounds almost like he comes from there!!!). The AIRFIX KITS are one of my favorite bands of all time. They can do no wrong. Go on Phil!!!



NN – "Pasivos Muertos" EP (Lengua Armada)
Martin (Limp Wrist/Needles) slows down the tempo ever so slightly from his other bands and delivers some fucking *ripping* Spanish hardcore. This is NN's second EP and it just blew me away.

MORNE – "Twilight Burns" EP (Feral Ward)
I was gonna list the LP, but the 7" is just as good. Epic, doom-laden melodic crust…taking the best parts of shit like AXEGRINDER and mixing it with the epic-ness of NEUROSIS. Love it.

SILLA ELECTRICA – "Hundir" EP (Blind Owl)
Wow. Male/female trade-off Spanish punk. Super catchy infectious tunes…with our very own Clara (ex-*MRR* coordinator) on vocals and guitar.

PIERCED ARROWS – "Paranoia" EP (Tombstone)
Fred and Toody still got it. You can't get away from it sounding like DEAD MOON, which is fine by me. It's an inspiration that they can still bang out top-notch records.

YOUNG GOVERNER – "English Tim" EP (Static Shock)
I didn't just pick this 'cos I'm English Tim (I mean not the actual one…oh you know what I mean). Crazy, infectious, blown-out garage rock. The other YOUNG GOVERNOR 7" from '09 is a blast too.

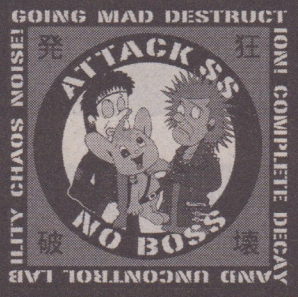
SOMETHING FIERCE – "There Are No Answers" EP (Bitchin' Riffage)
Genius songwriting. Tight as fuck. Like a modern day BUZZCOCKS. SOMETHING FIERCE's LP is fantastic too.

DESKONOCIDOS / SACRED SHOCK – split EP (Todo Destruido / Desobediencia)
More great shit from SACRED SHOCK. Both releases from DESKONOCIDOS last year are top ten material. Abrasive yet super catchy Spanish punk, but from Texas.

NEVER HEALED – "Untitled" EP (Painkiller)
Dark, depressing hardcore. Took a while to get the idea of catchy hardcore riffs with rasping black metal vocals, but now NEVER HEALED is in constant rotation. Bulldozer live too. If any of guys need a hug…call me up.

JUDGEMENT – "Just Be" EP (Prank)
One of my fave Japanese bands with a pretty epic return to form. Searing hardcore like the Japanese only seem to be able to do.

FRAMTID / PISSCHRIST – split EP (H:G Fact)
I know it's 11, but fuck it. I love FRAMTID, and 2009 was the year I immersed my self in blown out hardcore from LEBENDEN TOTEN to NERVESKADE. FRAMTID is the best…and PISSCHRIST is not far behind. *Harshhhhhhh*.



Andrew Underwood

ATTACK SS – "No Boss" EP (Detonate)
Fükken punk and nothing but. Five dudes from the suburbs of Nagoya banging out tunes about loving beer and hating work that stand up to just about anything that came out of Kyushu in the early '80s. There's not a hint of the last 20 years of hardcore in the sound, just tortured amps and some of the snottiest vox ever captured on tape. DISORDER…CONFUSE…GAI…you know—punk!

CHAOS DESTROY – "Music Not Music" EP (Not Very Nice)
With a noise channel standing in for the guitar, CHAOS DESTROY blazes a trail of (intentional) incompetence straight into my top ten of the year. You can take your "swamp blues punk" and "neanderthal garage rock" and keep 'em. *This* is punk at its most wprimitive—real Severna Park noise chaos indeed. Sadly, this record received a very limited release, so keep an eye out or just pick up the *Very Best of Hiro* CDr.

DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
I'm sure there'll be more than enough ink spilled on the merits of this LP. Easily one of the decade's finest (and probably the live band of the year as well!). I'll take this space to recommend the definitive reissue of the R.I.P./ESKORBUTO split LP on Munster and the long-overdue release of the *Nacido Para Estorbar* compilation on B-core instead. Spanish punk has always killed, and this LP wouldn't exist without the influence of bands like R.I.P., ATTAK, and FRENOPATICSS alongside DISCHARGE and CONFUSE.

LOST CAUSE – "The Final Gig" CD (self-released)
This is the sound of hate and frustration—the pointlessness of life distilled into the last recordings by a criminally underrated band. These songs are easily their best work and are just as easily some of the finest tracks put out by an American band this year. Of course they were released as a gig-only CDr for the final LOST CAUSE gig. Fuck, is there no justice? Vicious vocals, scathing leads, and a Motörpunk rhythm section most bands would kill for. If you love BASTARD, do yourself a favor and beg for a copy of this disc.

LOTUS FUCKER – LP (RSR)
Sneaking in just under the wire with a late December release, it's no surprise that this is one of the year's best. I've been waiting with baited breath for a new LOTUS FUCKER recording since last year's masterful *Answer=Bloodwashed Noise* demo, and holy fuck did they deliver! Recorded in one take, this is as close to a live gig as you can get on a piece of wax, and the energy and passion of the delivery suits the controlled chaos of the music. This is the logical conclusion of 30 years of hardcore punk, a fine blend of the best of Italian, Japanese, and American sounds that four fevered brains can deliver.

D-CLONE / MÖRPHEME – split EP (Mouse)
I'm cheating a bit with this one, since it's a trojan horse for me to include both D-CLONE's *Drop a Noise Bomb* EP and MÖRPHEME's debut on Prank in my top ten as well. Both are worthy releases, but I would have felt silly claiming that 30% of the year's best music was made by two bands (however true that might be). At any rate, the material on this split more than stands up to the solo releases by these two bands. D-CLONE is, of course, pure D-beat worship as filtered through the mighty noise of DISCLOSE. They are ferocious in their delivery, with strong songwriting behind the wall of slashing fuzz. MÖRPHEME's tracks are a Finnish-influenced noise-core fist to the face. This is easily the best split record of the year, and that's saying something when it had to contend with the FRAMTID/PISSCHRIST split EP.

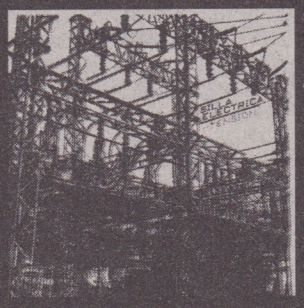
PAINTBOX – "Trip, Trance & Travelling" LP (Prank)
Many years in the making, and well worth the wait. Bizarre, psychedelic, beautiful, harsh, soaring…the number of adjectives one could use to describe this record is virtually limitless. How about totally fucking genius? This is one of those records to which you can return again and again and hear something new every time. *Trip, Trance & Travelling* is my pick for the best album of the decade and a testament to the brilliance of my favorite punk guitarist of all time (RIP Chelsea). There are no more words. Just listen.

PEOPLE – "Fairy Tale" demo (self-released)
This is sex punk for sex punks. So SWANKYS it hurts. From the porno/

bondage aesthetic to the swagger of the riffs and the sneer of the vocals, this is a band born to inspire snogging on the dance floors and punk houses worldwide. There aren't a lot of bands that can do '77 in '09, but PEOPLE more than pull it off. Fucking great. Anybody want to sell me their earlier EP for a stupid amount of money?

SILLA ELECTRICA – "Tension" EP (Blondes Must Die)
Very few bands can pull off a sound this classic without falling into the "retro" category. While the music is fantastic melodic hardcore that leans punk, the real brilliance of SILLA ELECTRICA is the incredibly dynamic vocals. I can't think of another band that does better male/female vocal tradeoffs. These songs (along with select tracks from '08s *Cloaca* EP) will be mix-tape fodder for years to come.

V/A – "Yotsuva" LP (Crust War)
Another late December release, and one that I was drooling over months in advance. What a lineup: ISTERISMO, DEATH DUST EXTRACTOR, LASTLY, and ZYANOSE all bashing at your eardrums with three songs apiece! While many compilations are justly maligned these days as dumping grounds for bands' lesser material, Crust War comps (as proven by 2005's *Konton Damaging Ear Massacre*) are very much the exception. With a half-EPs worth of top-notch material from each band this platter is a must-have. In fact, the A-side's ISTERISMO/DEATH DUST EXTRACTOR attack may just be the best fifteen minutes of hardcore released this year. For my money these are also the best ZYANOSE songs they've released so far. Like all Crust War releases, this will most likely disappear in the blink of an eye, so get to ordering, *stat*.



Dooley

I'll be the first to say, my top ten sucked last year. Don't get me wrong, I love all the records I chose. But if you read it, you may have realized that I put in two records that came out the year before and one that was a re-issue of a record that came out ten years previous. You also may have noticed that it was only a top 9. The powers that be vetoed one of my choices stating that one of the members of the band was too famous for MRR to review, even though there was an occasional shitworker/ contributer in the band. You can probably guess what band it was. I could have added one record to make it an even ten, but I was kinda bitter about that and chose to go the silent protest route. Anyway, this year, not only are all of the records current releases from 2009, but there are actually ten of them! So, without further ado, my top ten:

RVIVR – "Life Moves" EP (Rumbletowne)
I probably should have put this one in my decade top ten, judging by how often I listen to it. It's pretty much the most perfect pop punk record I can recall since I don't know when. I'm not going to try and compare these kids to any more widely known band; it just wouldn't get the point across on how good they are. Super catchy tunes and lyrics that are sometimes depressing, and others that reaffirm why I love punk so much make this my favorite record of the year, hands down. Watching them play live, it is obvious these kids absolutely love what they do.

HEX DISPENSERS – "Winchester Mystery House" LP (Douchemaster)
I had heard of this band for a while before I heard this. I looked high and low for their records but couldn't find them anywhere, other than some German label's mail order. It was super expensive, so I just decided to pass, and now I'm kicking myself for not jumping when I had the chance. I still haven't heard that first LP, but I'm willing to bet that it rules, just judging by what this record has to offer. I'd call it dark rock'n'roll, similar to the MARKED MEN, but not as poppy sounding. Maybe like a modern version of THE KIDS?

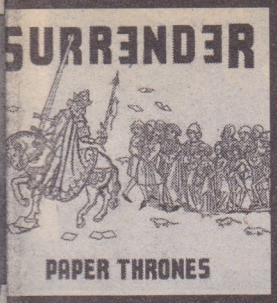
COMPLICATIONS – LP (Feral Ward)
I don't know if this was even officially released yet. I can't find it online anywhere, nor have I seen a regular copy of it for sale anywhere. I snatched a copy of this when they were in the Bay for some shows last October. Being the dumbass that I am, I never picked up a copy of the first EP before those shows, so that was my introduction. They fucking ruled, and this record does to. It's about as close to MOTORHEAD as it gets without having a giant gnarly mustachioed cowboy as your singer. 'Nuff said.

GLUE – "Still Here" EP (Rumbletowne)
The fist time this band played here, I slept through the show. No joke. It was a Sunday afternoon, I was hung-over, and woke up around one in the afternoon wondering why the fuck there was a show going one so goddamned early. I couldn't bring myself to get outta bed and go check things out, but I do recall them sounding quite good. I think it was a year or so later that my band played a show with them in a boxcar in Weed, CA. I had to work early the next morning, so we played and cut out before we could watch them. Lucky enough, we played with them the next day at the 16th street BART stop. The show ruled, GLUE ruled, and the first listen of the record ruled. I love the way the basslines and guitar work together to make the gloomy sound of this record. The vocals have a rad strained quality, but not quite screaming. This is perfectly non-crusty gloomy Northwest awesomeness.

YOUNG OFFENDERS/GIANT HAYSTACKS – "Sale" LP (625)
This record is great. These are my favorite YOUNG OFFENDERS songs so far. Their EPs are all great, but these songs really stand among the rest. If I had to describe the sound, I'd probably say early CLASH with a touch of BLITZ here and there. The live shows are great too—tons of energy and conviction make them really fun to watch. GIANT HAYSTACKS came to a close too soon. The one time I saw them, I didn't know who they were, and unfortunately it was their last show. The usual comparisons to GANG OF FOUR or the MINUTEMEN are not inaccurate, but make no mistake, GIANT HAYSTACKS had a sound that was unmistakably their own. The bouncy basslines and jangly guitars work perfectly together, and the political lyrics add depth to the already widely diverse overall package.

MARKED MEN – "Ghosts" LP (Dirtnap)
There's nothing I can say about this band that hasn't been said before. They are pretty much perfect. Honestly. Each time there's a new record, they just get better, and this is no exception. The few split EPs that came out between this and their last record, *Fix My Brain*, were just enough to satiate my thirst for more MARKED MEN. Unfortunately, they are on extended hiatus for a while, but as they have said, are most definitely not breaking up. If you can, go to Chaos en Tejas this May to catch their last shows for a while.

SURRENDER – "Paper Thrones" LP (Thrillhouse / La Vida Es Un Mus)
Surrender was a greatly underappreciated band that split up recently when half of the band moved away from The Bay. Political punk a la CRASS RECORDS. Not as artsy as some of the CRASS output, but



every bit full of thought-provoking political rhetoric. You can't go wrong with any of their splits,EPs or this, their only full length record.

THE GATEWAY DISTRICT – "Some Days You Get the Thunder" LP (It's Alive)
At first, I was a little disappointed that this didn't sound more like their first EP. It took a little bit to grow on me, but it did just that. Just for a point of reference, this band includes members of some of the best Minneapolis bands, including but not limited to the SOVIETTES, the SALTEENS, and OFF WITH THEIR HEADS. While the EP was pretty straight forward face paced pop punk, this record has more variety. Fast songs and slower songs, catchy pop punk, and even some country twang here and there bring a wide variety of sounds together to make one solid record.

SCREAMING FEMALES – "Power Move" LP (Don Giovanni)
I love this band. They have a very unique sound that is nearly impossible to describe, maybe like a hippie-free jam band? Their last album, *What if Someone is Watching their TV?* was a shoe-in for my decade top ten. This new one shows some progression in their sound. There are more developed instrumental parts, accompanied by haunting vocal effects on top of the already haunting natural vocals that are real attention getters. It would be a crime to write about this band without mentioning how great of a guitar player Marissa is. Really, go look for video of her playing. It will blow your mind. I love this band, and hope they continue to release solid records.

THE FLESHIES – "Brown Flag" LP (Recess)
Fuck yeah! These guys were always great, and just keep getting better. I thought they broke-up for a while over last couple of years, but apparently they're back at it. This new album is probably their best stuff to date. It picks up right where they left off with *Scrape the Walls*. These are super catchy, fist-in-the-air, sing-along jams that are undeniably great. Their live shows are pretty damned fun, too. There aren't many other bands whose singer is as energetic as Mr. Geek is. He's constantly rocking, be it hanging from the ceiling, rolling on the floor in the puddles of spilt beer and grime, or crowd surfing. Nothing gets in the way of the FLESHIES and a good time.

Kenny Kaos

TRANZMITORS – "Busy Singles" LP (Deranged)
These guys have really got a great sound. It's punk, sure, but mostly it's power-pop. It reminds me of the late seventies, when it was okay for punk and power-pop bands to have a sort of new wave sound, like the JAM. The entire LP, which is mostly a compilation of their earlier singles (hence the name), is solid. In addition to the JAM, I'm reminded of the BOYS, the VAPORS, and the NEWTOWN NEUROTICS.

HAPPY BURGER – "Pizza All Around" EP (Douchemaster)
A couple times of year, I get consumed with a record that, more than anything, is just fun: "I really like a cheeseburger, but I think I like you better." That is funny shit. It's also lo-fi and catchy as all fuck. They are from France, for those who keep track of these sorts of things. I wonder if these guys like Freedom Fries with their burgers?

LES HATEPINKS – "Live at the Stork Club" LP (Crapoulet)
This is an excellent live recording of a great band. I was supposed to be at the show, but was totally sick and couldn't make it. As it turns out, it was my last opportunity to see them. Fuck.

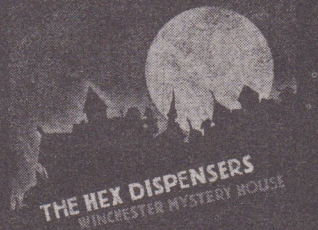
KEPI GHOULIE – "Hanging Out/American Gothic" 2xLP (Asian Man)
Since the break-up of the GROOVIE GHOULIES, KEPI GHOULIE has been playing solo. These two records are also available on CD individually. *American Gothic* is an acoustic record and *Hanging Out* is electric. I'm not generally a fan of acoustic stuff, but can't get enough of this record and am equally fond of *Hanging Out*. I was always a fan of the GROOVIE GHOULIES, but have to admit that this has a certain passion that I wasn't necessarily seeing/hearing in the GROOVIE GHOULIES' later releases. Get the double LP and see which one you like better.

THE MANIKINS – "I Want My Baby Dead/Don't Look Back at Me" (FdH)
Anybody who knows me knows that I have a weak spot for power-pop-punk. In my mind, nobody has mastered this genre like the Scandinavians have. The MANIKINS, from Sweden, have not put out a record that I haven't been very enthusiastic about and this is no exception. Unbelievably catchy. Seriously.

GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN / FEVER B – Seasonal Seven Inch Split 7" (Die Slaughterhaus)
Unless something changes, you can expect to find Gentleman Jesse on this list for as long as he decides he wants to make records. This one here is another infectious power-pop number, which happens to be a sort of Christmas song. The FEVER B track is just a bonus. It is more of an indie-pop song, not unlike FROM BUBBLEGUM TO SKY, if you are familiar with that band.

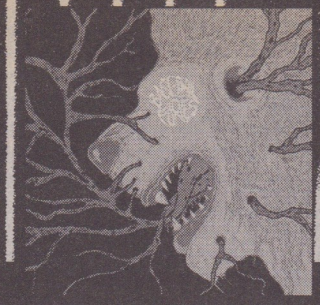
THE CUTE LEPERS – "You Don't Have to Belong to the Religious Right / Any Danger Love" (1-2-3-4 Go!)
When it comes to putting out melodic, catchy punk, not unlike what the kids were putting out in 1977, STEVE E. is a genius. Too bad there is no money in it. This is extremely similar to the BRIEFS, maybe not quite as abrasive and with maybe just a bit more of a new wave and pop edge to it.

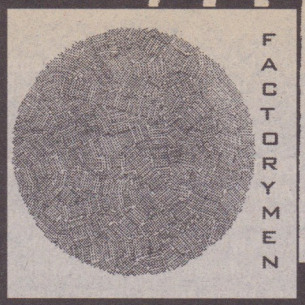
POPPETS – "U.T.M.A.R.K.E.N." – 12" (FdH/P.Trash)
Like their countrymen, the MANIKINS, POPPETS are extremely catchy. I think the similarities end there. POPPETS are much more raw and lo-fi and with just a drum kit and a guitar, Magnus and Lina manage to crank out some real gems. Every time I put this record on, I find myself playing it two or three times.

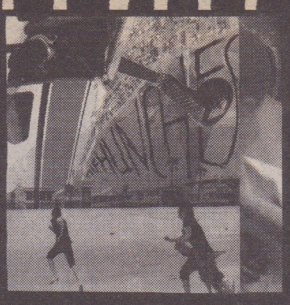


THE HUSSY – "Winter Haze" EP (Fistful of Records)
Another two-piece and this one is from Madison, Wisconsin. When I first heard this, I had to contact the band to get a copy for myself. It's melodic and all, or it just wouldn't have made my list, but it is also very raw and garage-y. They somehow get a full sound, considering it's just a drum kit and guitar, and they work the male/female competing vocals very well. This has got a sense of urgency that most bands just can't generate.

THE HEX DISPENSERS – "Winchester Mystery House" LP (Douchemaster)
I have the worst time trying to describe this band. I always want to say it's swampy, but it really isn't. The vocals sometimes remind me of the RAMONES, without sounding like the RAMONES. The vocals also remind me of DEVO. At times they remind me of the WIPERS, but only at times. And now I think I've convinced myself that they sound like Australian punk from the late seventies. I imagine I'll talk myself out of that one at some point. This is a great record and about that, I am certain.







Chuck Barrels

2009 was a helluva year. Australia continued its renaissance, we said goodbye to some great bands, said hello to some great new ones, Skull Music continued to dominate the airwaves, one of the best hardcore records of recent times was released, punk kept getting weird, garage bands continued to go psych. Lots of fun. It felt OK to say goodbye to the HUNCHES and BASEBALL FURIES knowing we have bands like HOME BLITZ and DRY ROT waiting in the wings. The cycle continues. Here are my twelve favorite LPs and seven favorite EPs of the year, very clever, I know.

Top Twelve 12"s:

12) BASEBALL FURIES – "Throw Them To The Lions" LP (Big Neck)
The swan song from modern garage-punk's unsung heroes. Recorded almost five years ago, the band that never caught the break they deserved go out with the class they always embodied. Less savage than their younger outings, their final LP shows them as true rockers, still making punk rock but in a more wizened and true rock'n'roll direction without giving up any edge. Ten desperate, sleazy and raw Rust Belt anthems for the down-n-out from Western New York's answer to the DEAD BOYS.

11) TY SEGALL – "Lemons" LP (Goner)
A step beyond the more traditional and raw one man band stylings of his debut long player, *Lemons* finds TY stretching out within the garage-punk idiom with finesse and savvy songwriting chops seemingly beyond a kid so young of age. Manic energy interlaced with well drawn pop hooks, relying on strength of composition and craft instead of lo-fi bluster. Almost every song on this could have made a great A-side of a single.

10) WIZZARD SLEEVE – "Make The World Go Away" LP (HozAc)
The best synth-punk record to be released since whatever your favorite LOST SOUNDS record came out. Great for many of the same reasons LOST SOUNDS were, carving a definitively punk niche out via a genre that often tends to lean towards the more "New Wave" (ie wimpy) side of things. Thick and natural sounding organ/keys, some dark metallic influence, and heavy drug-fuelled downer vibes take this a step above. Nothing pretty here, just a raw slab of Southern bred mushroom synth-rock.

9) EL JESUS DE MAGICO – "Scalping the Guru" LP (Columbus Discount)
I've heard their recordings both prior and post this LP, and I could care less for any of them. Which makes the strength of this LP all the more legitimate. The most truly psych-fried and out-sounding LP of the past year, when a lot of bands were trying to go this route and just coming up short. The perfect LP for late night drug sessions, it goes to the edge, falls off, and comes back around to do it again. A total lo-fi kraut-rock mind exploder/expander.

8) THEE OH SEES – "Dog Poison" LP (Captured Tracks)
I guess I'm not supposed to like this band because they release too may records and are really hip people from San Francisco or something. Who fucking cares? They can release as many records as they want and play "fake" garage or whatever else gets the haters chattering. They're a good band no matter which way you slice it. Ostensibly a collection of demos/rough tracks, this LP finds Dwyer and his gal singer cruising down an acid-folk river of West Coast psychedelica and freakbeat garage moves. Equally mellow and fried, acoustic and electric/eclectic, this was my favorite record to start the morning off this past year.

7) FACTORYMEN – "Shitman" LP (Richie Records)
One-man home recording projects are all the rage amongst the "hip" crowd these days, delivering unto the world a mountain of future dollar bin fodder. Wimpy, synthy, most of them just sound like bad CURE or JOY DIVISION rips with mumbled vox and fuzzy excuses for backing tracks. But not the FACTYORYMEN, no sir. A real head-scratcher of a job from some fucking weirdo that takes so many twists and turns you'll spend months trying to decipher the how and why of the "songs." Lo-fi synth warble, wholesale rips of easy listening tunes, tape fuckery, answering machine messages and more loosely linked slices of eccentricity assembled with "a sociopath's attention to detail". Thank god, a one-man "band" with some balls and truly offbeat character that sounds like CHROME or a serial stalker instead of some wispy haired ponce whining about not getting laid.

6) DRY ROT – "Philistine" LP (Parts Unknown)
Best hardcore full length of the year, no contest. These kooky California kids actually lived up to expectations, assembling a bizarre and ripping LPs worth of ragers and freakers. An invigorating blend of classic hardcore stylings and crafty weird-punk maneuvers. A record that will be sure to please true coremen, and ruffle the panties of all poseurs.

5) VEE DEE – "Public Mental Health System" LP (Criminal IQ)
It took a few years to finally reach completion, but Chicago's VEE DEE finally finished this double LP heavy rock monster and I believe it was worth the wait. Stark black-and-white imagery enhances the vintage vibe of psych-punk electricity and drive this power trio peddle. True rock'n'roll action, and although it steps away a bit from the MISFITS-go-to-Nam feel of their earlier work, they lurch forward with some fantastic wah-pedal fueled burl, influenced by your favorite basement heavies and monster rockers of the Sixties/Seventies. All guts here, no pussyfooting.

4) THEE OH SEES – "Help" LP (In the Red)
Wow, people are going to be really upset I actually liked two of this band's records so much! The follow-up to their breakthrough *Master's Bedroom...* LP and its ethereal psych-rock shows them shifting gears yet again to create a ballsy and loud garage-rock record with fantastic guitar effects, dreamy guy/girl vocal harmonies and nail-it-home rhythms. Sure, they play it mellow on a few cuts too, but the guitar-rockers are true jammers in a heavy-psych influenced vein. There might actually even be some punk songs here! Is that okay?

3) HOME BLITZ – "Out of Phase" LP (Richie)
Another youngster who gives me hope for the future of underground rock, HOME BLITZ were one more act that actually lived up to and exceeded the expectations I had for them. A mind-bogglingly diverse record full of juvenile punk rock, low budget power pop, JONATHAN RICHMAN-like exuberance, COCK SPARRER covers and offbeat rock'n'roll from the wilds of New Jersey. Really hard to categorize, the kid transcends genre to create one of the most unique sounding records of recent vintage. It's amazing to see someone so young execute their vision with such energy and aplomb.

2) HOMOSTUPIDS – "The Load" LP (Load)
America's Greatest Band offered up their second long-awaited full length after much waiting, and it's a doozy. Instead of releasing "The Intern Part II," they decide to give us more, weirding it out on plenty of tracks a la *Brutal Birthday*, but also giving us a steaming pile of bona-fide shit-fi punk rock action as well. This record encompasses all that I love: shitty garage, furious punk, little to no regard for recording quality or mass appeal, moronic song concepts and lyrics. It's tough to wrap your head around it, but these guys actually stepped out of the box here and crafted one hell of a record. I can't believe anyone thinks this band is anything less than great.

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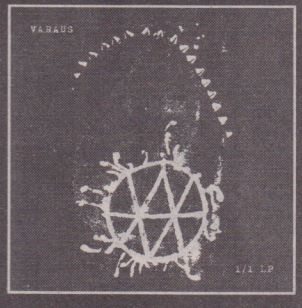

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MORNE "Twilight Burns / Seams" EP
MORNE "Untold Wait" LP*CD
Al "The Sounds of Hearts" LP
KRIG I HUDIK EP
MASSHYSTERI "Var Del Av Stan" LP*CD
CRUDE "1999" LP
HARD SKIN "Same Meat, Different Gravy" LP
DIRECT CONTROL "Farewell" LP
ÄÄRITILA "Ennen Huomista" LP*CD
WARCRY "Not So Distant Future" LP*CD
LEBENDEN TOTEN "Near Dark" CD
MEANWHILE "Reality or Nothing" LP*CD
MEANWHILE "The Road To Hell" LP
MEANWHILE "Remaining Right: Silence" LP
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REPERCUSSIONS "No Peace" 7"
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CRIMINAL DAMAGE "No Solution" CD
VICIOUS "Alienated" LP
VICIOUS "Igen" 7"
TOTALITÄR "Vi Ar Eliten" 7"
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GORILLA ANGREB "Bedre Tider" LP*CD
INEPSY - City Weapons LP*CD
NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS LP
WARCRY "Maniacs on Pedestals" CD
CALL THE POLICE "1984 in 2003" CD
INEPSY "Rock N Roll Babylon" LP*CD
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1) THE HUNCHES – "Exit Dreams" LP (In the Red)
One of, if not the best, garage-punk bands of the past decade call it quits but hang on long enough to go out the right way, with this monolith of farewell record. Chris Gunn has the best guitar sound of the modern age, and wields the axe with such skillful abandon it's frightening. Blown out yet beautiful, the HUNCHES excelled at making ugly sounds and juxtaposing them against delicate moments of staggering emotional depth. This was a difficult record to listen to at times, because it was so good at cannily evoking feelings from the listener. Songs that have you reminiscing about your own times gone by, friends and loves passed on, childhood innocence lost and the longing for it to return. Unbelievable how it creates such a state of graceful melancholy while still providing savage rock punch and stunning guitar scree. Raw and bleeding in such a heartfelt way, I'll miss these glorious cavemen.

Top Seven Singles/EPs:
7) FRESH & ONLYS – "Imaginary Friends" 7' (Chuffed)
The LPs they released were very good, but I think this debut single was their truly phenomenal record. "Come Dance With Me" is still their best song in my opinion. "Endless Love" and its playful hook is a close second. Minimal, rhythmic and eternally catchy offbeat pop. Rounded out with two more ace tracks, this one delivered in full. I had to do a nut check after I liked something this "wimpy," but I can't lie, I really do enjoy it. Plus, I needed something to bring me back to reality after listening to all this "Skull Music" and inbred Australian lunk-punk.

6) CHARLIE & THE MOONHEARTS – "Drop In, Drop Out" EP (Tic Tac Totally)
Who the fuck cares about surf music anymore? Such a dead genre, but the MOONHEARTS make me glad someone was paying attention. And these kids aren't really playing surf anyway, just using it as a launching pad for some snotty punk rock with twangy guitar and uptempo echoed-out recklessness. Purely Californian youthful abandon committed to wax. And "Stoney Jam" shows they can rock and get weird too.

5) KIM PHUC – "Weird Skies/Suicide Circle" (Dear Skull)
A pretty sick fucking band. Heavy rock with a brutal dead-end vibe, both songs are punishing and visceral to the point of total bleakness. There's no glimmer of hope here, just the dark recesses of ugly minds. A real feel good record.

4) FNU RONNIES – "Golemsmoke" 12" (Night People)
2009 was quite a year for ugly music. *Watchful Eye* makes me want to sleep with one eye open. Paranoia inducing frenzy. Fancy packaging aside (one-sided silk screened 12"), this thing put the creep on like no other record this year. Hardcore, punk, experimental, weird, I'm not sure what tags to put on this thing to make you want to investigate. It's just fucked and messy and musically mean-spirited.

3) UV RACE – "Malaria" EP (S-S)
The LP was cool as shit as well, but this little salvo of Orstralian dum-dum rock really sums this band up for me. Base level punk rock from a bunch of bumbling kids, it's ultimately so enjoyable because it's so honest. Plain, simple and stoopid rock'n'roll like it was meant to be played. No pretense, just fun and shitty punk that actually isn't as dumb as it seems. Right?

2) WATERY LOVE – "I'm A Skull" EP (Richie)
"I'M A FUCKING SKULL!" I'm almost glad CLOCKCLEANER broke up so this record could be made. Three anthems to absolutely nothing. Stupid, stupid music that I'm glad people are taking the time to make. I hope they do more.

1) CHINESE BURNS – "Can Dig" EP (Must Destroy Mankind)
I didn't even see this one coming, but these young Antipodean drunkards tossed off this killer four-song single that burns from start to finish. They actually manage to out-dumb their mates in UV RACE if you can believe that. Recorded by a member of EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING if you need to see some credentials. Sloppy and sneakily catchy garage-punk smash-n-bash from some lovable teenage sausageheads. I love you Australia.

Paco Mus

FUCK! It only feels like yesterday when I did the last top ten of the year. Time goes by really fast. Anyway, making this list I realized that I've hardly liked any full-length albums this year. I did however make a huge list of candidates for the 7" list. Also, I noticed most of the stuff I played the most this year fell amongst two categories: Spanish Punk and Hardcore and Japanese crust. How weird. I feel like most albums I got this year are totally disposable and if someone took them from my house I probably wouldn't notice.
Please when reading this list bear in mind this:
1. I decided not to list any record I released this year otherwise OTAN 7" will be number one in the 7" list and the LP list will be topped by DESTINO FINAL and VOCO PROTESTA. As much as it sounds like a cliché, those are my favourite records this year.
2. I have pretty much only listened to DAVID BOWIE this year but I've also played a lot of the HORRORS Primary Colours *2xLP and VOLAH* Dimensiones Del Trance Cosmico *LP so maybe I shouldn't have a Top Ten in* MRR *anymore?*

Top Ten 7"s
ATENTADO – "Todo Esta Oscuro" EP (Discos Enfermos/ Crust as Fuck)
I am pretty certain this is the EP I played the most this year. This two girls-two boys band from Barcelona had some mega-noisy demo recordings from a while back that were extremely over the top in the CONFUSE way. However this recording is not nearly as noisy. Basic and angry female fronted hardcore with rough recording, blown out bass and mega basic drum beat. Sounding amateur, urgent and raging at times but always extremely simple and noisy. Five track EP housed in what feels like the perfect artwork.

CRIMEN DE ESTADO – "La Bomba Atomica" EP (Malsonido)
More feral hardcore-punk from Barcelona. Fronted by one of the wildest frontman I've seen live lately and backed by members of many of my favourite bands this lot totally gets the spirit of early MG-15 or ANTI-DOGMATIKSS. Four track recording that reminds me of South American tape recordings while keeping their feet firmly in DISCHARGE territory. Rabid and irreverent punk played by punks. Carefully crafted artwork to top it.

SUDOR – "Ciudad Imperial" EP (Solo Para Punks)
Another Spanish band. This time from Toledo although I believe they may live in Madrid. Hi-Energy Scandinavian influenced hardcore with an angry and strong anarchist message. Some songs may bring to mind songs by other bands but they manage to make you forget it easily. Nice artwork too.

XYX – "Momento Acido Contemporaneo" EP (Skulltones)
Bass and Drums. No guitars. Is that punk? Certainly it is for me. Hailing from Mexico XYX have been gracing us with a steady stream of recordings both on physical format and through their website. This their second 7" is a scary piece of music, one that I found myself playing on repeat for weeks. I am still trying to make sense of their lyrics but we don't have peyote here in Hackney. At times they remind me *a lot* of VIRGENES ADOLESCENTES and 713avo AMOR debut albums but filtered thru a less arty-more crude pedal. Can't wait for their LP.

SYSTEM FUCKER – "What is Freedom" EP (Crust War)
Another Crust War release, another winner. More raw Japanese hardcore from Osaka. More ear bleeding fuzz and more black and white graphics. I can't get enough of this shit.

D-CLONE – "Drop a Noise Bomb" EP (Damaging Noise)
Following their two previous splits and keeping the levels of DISCHARGE obsession on check D-CLONE delivered another slice of out of control noisy d-beat from Japan. Flawless in nearly every aspect. The only thing that makes me sad is how limited this thing was. When will labels realize that there are more than 300 people interested in the current wave of Japanese noise punk?

FRAMTID / PISSCHRIST – split 7" (H:G Fact)
What a pairing! FRAMTID are probably the greatest band alive (sorry GAUZE). Every recording they've done is perfect and live they are the most devastating attack I've ever witnessed. I think this recording doesn't do them justice, maybe the mastering is a bit flat but still it is miles ahead from most punk bands these days. PISSCHRIST are on the same page: High-energy hardcore, unstoppable d-beat drumming with killer riffin' and immense vocal delivery.

COPROLITOS – "Miss Melilla" EP (Blondes Must Die)
More Spanish punk. COPROLITOS are a female fronted weird punk band from Madrid. This their fourth single sounds bouncy, angular and naïve at times but ultimately rocks hard. Pogo-able and catchy with the right touch of urgency. The riff at the end off 'No Pasaras' is one of the greatest I heard in a long time.

FELON Y SU MIERDOFON – "La Alegria De Cantar" EP (Alehop!)
Post-ULAN BATOR TRIO one-man band. Hand made instruments and acid influenced proto-punk mixed with what I can only imagine is a lot of mental insanity. Quick, someone makes this freak the king of Spain!

N/N – "Pasivos Muertos" EP (Lengua Armada)
Second EP by these Latino punkers resident in the Bay Area. Tuneful punk rock that rages in every possible way. It manages to catch the Latino American hardcore punk spirit like no-one else does. In a way it feels like part RRV part LOS VIOLADORES with a hint of LOS CRUDOS on the mix. It is great to hear a band where you can understand (I can) everything they say and it is not utter bullshit. I need to mention that the beginning of "Policia" must be one of the toughest starts of a song in recent memory. I die to see them live.

Top Nine LPs:
RATAS DEL VATICANO – "Mocosos Pateticos" LP (Siltbreeze)
Totally don't-give-a-fuck non-fidelity punk from Mexico. Primitive songs about masturbation and killing your teachers. Nasty guitar sound that sounds like it was plugged into a washing machine and a weird keyboard that sounds like they stole it from their local church. Up there with TAMPAX and the first GERMS single. I think these guys are weird but I am totally into them.

V/A – YATSUVA LP (Crust War)
ISTERISMO, ZYANOSE, DEATH DUST EXTRACTOR and LASTLY. What a line up! Four aberrant Japanese bands that sound and look apart. All share a noisy wall of distorted bass, mega blown out recordings with ten pedals per guitar and feedback layered recordings. Out of control crasher crusties influenced by GLOOM and DOOM. I highly recommend anyone to track down all the other recordings by these four bands.

UV RACE –LP (Aarght!)
Hailing from Australia this five piece commune of twisted minds play a fantastic mix of naïve psych post punk that makes you wonder about the right state of mind of the members as much as the date of the recording. I played this on repeat for weeks whilst re-reading the inner notes.

DRUNKDRIVER / MATTIN – "List Of Profound Insecurities" LP (Badmaster)
At this point I think I am certain that Mattin + anything = genius. He's one of the few people playing music these days whose approach I know is always gonna surprise me. Maybe not please me but definitely make me scratch my head or hit it against objects. This collaboration is just more proof of it. Feedback laden attack ala BILLY BAO's Accumulation mixed with more articulated noise. Not a punk rock record per se but punk as fuck in my opinion.

PAINTBOX – "Trip Trance Travelling" 2LP (H:G Fact/ Prank)
A double hardcore record with horns, flutes and all sorts of un-punk instruments. Clearly influenced by Psych, J-Pop and classic rock. Who would have thought??? However this, the third PAINTBOX album and the last with their sadly gone Chelsea on guitar, is every bit of a ferocious record. Hard to listen for some and highly criticised for many as novelty without direction. In my opinion a masterpiece that grows with every listen. A future classic. Not necessarily only for people into hardcore and punk.

WASTED TIME – "Futility" LP (Grave Mistake)
Seeing WASTED TIME live this year was intense. They destroyed the Brighton Youth Centre where they played. Their live performance was immense and their frontman was just as big as the band. While not a fan of any of their previous efforts, which I probably passed as generic, their *Futility* LP grabbed me by surprise. The ten tracks of this album are a blistering sonic attack of immeasurable dimensions.

CROSS STITCHED EYES – Coranach LP (Alternative Tentacles)
Not much to say about this other than for my money this is the only band that have ever come close to sound like RUDIMENTARY PENI. Heavy doses of dark and heavy early KILLING JOKE meets PART1 with a personal touch. Definitely a band with heavy personality, a rare sign in this day and age.

APPARATUS – "Hardcore Religion" LP (Burn Out)
Not too often you come across vinyl records from Malaysia. What is certain is that in this case there is way more than what people may call novelty. Behind the ugly as fuck cover there is a gem of Scandinavian influenced hardcore with a quite raging recording that killed me from the moment I dropped the needle.

MIDNIGHT – "Berlin is Burning" 12" Picture Disc (Nuclear War Now)

Seeing MIDNIGHT and BONE AWL at a black metal fest in Germany was one of the highlights of last year. This record is just as great as that feeling. The title track is such a perfect song that I don't care if some people say this shit is metal or if the B side is a best off. VENOM meets GG ALLIN. Killer.

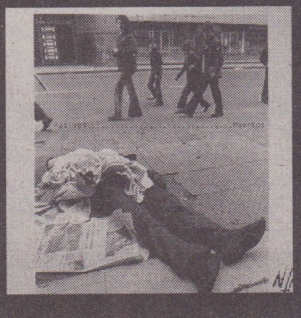
ANXIETY – "Pathetic" LP (Social Napalm)
The aesthetics of this record is the first thing that grabbed me. It looks like an old record to me, especially the back cover. It sounds quite unique, in the vein of old UK hardcore bands from the late '80s. Quite fast, intense and bassy sounding with a dirty recording. It has an angry and desperate feeling that's carried by the echo vocals and maniac drumming.

Cissie Scurlock

2009 was a great year for 7"s and demos. I didn't include any demos in my proper list, but I highly recommend ILEGAL, TUBERCULOSIS, RAYOS X, NUKKEHAMMER (might've come out in '08, but whatevs), and MANIPULATION... Now here's the rest of the hype in no particular order.

ATENTADO – "Todo Está Oscuro" EP (Discos Enfermos / Crust as Fuck)
Every time I listen to *Todo Está Oscuro* I bounce around my room basking in its rawness and playing air guitar to the rough, scratchy solos. ATENTADO plays the simplest riffs and drumbeats that I'm sure you've heard before, but their blown-out, minimal hardcore sound is rife with inspiration and charm. Definitive proof that hardcore punk can still be exciting and effective when it's stripped down to the bare essentials.

NN – "Pasivos Muertos" EP (Lengua Armada)
I really like the fact that each track on *Pasivos Muertos* stands out in a completely different way. The songs all have a slightly melodic current with a lot of rage, but



some of them lumber along while others have a bouncier rhythm. I love that the pounding, vicious "Policias" is followed by the ultra-catchy, upbeat "Abrazos." And if I can get all pro-local here, NN is one of my favorite San Francisco bands to see live—I've never seen 'em play a bad set.

MÖRPHEME – "Ounou No Rensa" EP (Prank)
San Francisco's MÖRPHEME plays hardcore that is reminiscent of the noisy set of Scandinavian-influenced Japanese bands. I know this style is all the rage at the moment, but these guys have seized the combination of hooks, atmosphere, and insanity that keeps the sound fresh and interesting. Their songs are tuneful despite the fact that they're loud, wild bursts, and the vocalist has a mental delivery with good use of accents, like random drawn out screams and howling. The songs are so littered with madness and unpredictable sounds that it takes many listens to digest it all—in fact after months of listening to it I still haven't.

NEEDLES – "Desastre" EP (Lengua Armada / Bad Skulls)
Hardcore that'll melt you mind starting with the first note. NEEDLES has created music that assaults more than just your auditory senses. I always feel a little mentally and physically worn after listening to *Desastre*—left in an endorphin-filled haze. A perfect way to start the day (wake and rage) or end the night.

OTAN – "Sociedad Despreciable" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
OTAN plays condensed, raw, intense hardcore punk rants in the mold of all the classics. Six of the seven songs on *Sociedad Despreciable* barely scratch the minute mark. The songs are so short that I don't feel bad about the fact that I can't stop flipping and listening to it, because even if I play it five times I've only spent 35 minutes of my day with it.

DRÖMDEAD – "Donde Esta Du Dios?" EP (Moo Cow)
Seven tracks of Finnish-inspired, anxiety-fueled abrasiveness. DRÖMDEAD's songs feature a raw, volatile atmosphere with a slight hint of melody that makes them worth thousands of repeat listens. Every time I throw this on I'm taken aback by the penetrability of the songs, and the hooks stay with me all day long. RIP Yani.

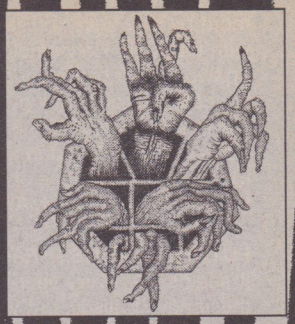
DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
The songs and playing on *Atrapados* are basic, but the end result is surprisingly complex and brilliant. I'm always more interested in bands that use simple elements to create their own sound, and really DESTINO FINAL has constructed an atmosphere and style that's not easy to pinpoint or describe. I mean sure there are tons of bands that DESTINO FINAL is obviously referencing, but they've undoubtedly created their own thing in the process, and it's a sound that's been resounding in my head since I've heard it. I have no doubts that I'll be able to pull this album out in ten years and couch dive all day long to it, provided my arthritis is cooperative…

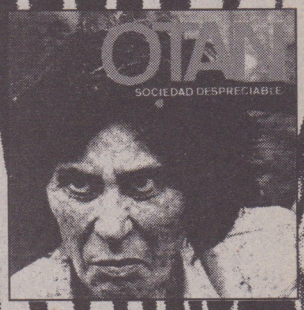
SACRED SHOCK – "You're Not With Us" LP (Residue)
SACRED SHOCK has defied the growing trend of filler-tainted hardcore LPs by releasing a totally solid full-length of all new, all ripping hardcore songs. I can tell that a lot of time and attention to detail was spent on these songs, although they're thankfully not overly showy or dramatic. When I put the needle down on this record I find it impossible to ignore. The songs are all great, the guitars have a hypnotic quality, and the low end shakes the table that my stereo occupies. OK, I'll admit I can do without the HEADCLEANERS cover (love the original, but I've never been a huge fan of cover songs on vinyl), but it's the first song on the second side so it's easy to skip… The rest of this LP is a killer though.

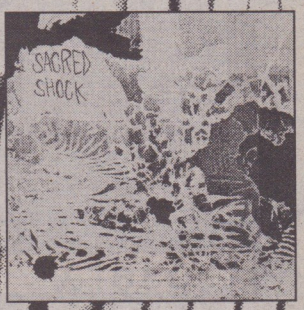
COMPLICATIONS – LP (Feral Ward)
Of all the current bands exploring the realms of mood-driven post punk and anarcho punk, COMPLICATIONS is the most essential. The guitar hooks and the solidity of the rhythm section are impossible to deny, and the band has an impressive ability for placing and riding out their melodies in the best way. This LP is a little more diverse and temperamental than COMPLICATIONS demo. Some of the songs have a faster more upbeat feel and some revel in the tedium of monotony. I still find the pacing and mood of COMPLICATIONS' music to be a great companion while walking, and it also seems a perfect soundtrack to the thunder, lightning, and rainstorm currently going on outside my window.

FOLKEIIS – "Hell Kaaos Night…" EP (Answer)
This one starts with deafening, thundering bass and then absolute chaos ensues. FOLKEIIS is yet another offering of relentless, noise-soaked Japanese hardcore. The endless mania goes from fast to mid-tempo to fast to slow to sole white guitar noise without warning. Virtually every song has a randomly placed mid-paced refrain to shield against the monotony of the noise. It's all great, but the crawling, destructive "Likaiset Kädet" solidifies this EP's placement on this list; it's a burly stomper that upon each listen further infects the core of my being.

Almost made the cut:
FIRMEZA 10 – "Hardcore Radikal" LP, WASTED TIME – "Futility" 12", NERVESKADE – "Acid Attak" EP, BRAINKILLER – "Endless" EP







Fred Schrunk

Dang, this year was a good year for DIY punk rock. The original list of "possible contenders" was nearly 50 records long. Whittling it down to the list below was quite an arduous task. But what's left here is, to me, clearly the best of the best!

RVIVR – "Life Moves" EP (Rumbletowne)
Yep, best record of 2009. Four songs, all absolutely killer. If you're into fast, dirty, melodic punk rock, this is as good as it gets. RVIVR is a band that is super politically and socially conscious, and that's reflected in the majority of their lyrical content. It's smart, well thought out, but most surprisingly, incredibly uplifting. The songs address topics that we should be pissed off about, and anger is important, but it's obviously not the solution. We can get off our lazy asses and do something about the shit we don't like in our community. But regardless of lyrics, the music itself is enough to warm the heart of even the most jaded punk. Pop punk delivered in a totally fresh, yet familiar style. You wouldn't find any cliches or copycat riffs from whatever is the flavor of the month. They bite nobody's style but their own. This is a fast, aggressive, politically charged and timeless.

THIS IS MY FIST / MAKED MEN – Split 7" (No Idea)
I don't care much for split 7"s. I mean I understand how they're a good marketing tool for a label or a band trying to appeal to a different audience. I just don't like them, I end up only listening to one side repeatedly, wishing I had

more by that band to listen to. But this is most definitely not the case with this split. Holy smokes does record ever rock. Both bands cough up two of their better songs for this one. The transition from one band to the other is real fluid; they complement each other very well. When I first got this record I think I listened both sides in their entirety eight or nine times in a row. And don't hold me to this, but the first song on the THIS IS MY FIST side is one of the best songs they've ever written. At least in the top five. And has MARKED MEN written a bad song? Ever?

FUTURE VIRGINS – "Easiest Years" EP (Plan-it-X)
It seems like every year-end top ten comes around, I end up singing these guys praises, but ya know what, they deserve it. The pop songs these guys write are truly electrifying. It is impossible to listen to a FUTURE VIRGINS song without dancing at least a little bit. Your body just takes over, you have no control. These guys are like the BANANAS of the next generation. Well, that's not fair equation cause the BANANAS are every bit as good now as they were ten years ago. But you know what I mean. Anyway, this record is as good, if not better than their first 7", which as we all know, is mind blowing. And the song "Radio Down" is one of the best singles of 2009. Brilliant.

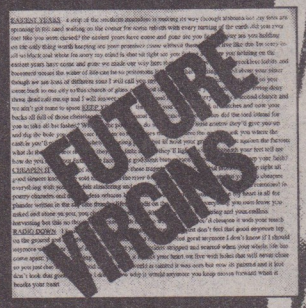
SONGS FOR MOMS – "I Used To Believe In the West" LP (Thrillhouse)
Perhaps the best band in the Bay Area right now. An all-lady three piece punk band that combines equal parts PATTI SMITH and LORETTA LYNN. They overlay country, folk, rock, and punk all at the same time. So you end up with an album that transitions from bouncy-pop song, to raw-aggression, to down tempo bittersweet folksy tunes. Then back again. And never does a note sound out of place. And in addition to creating one of the best albums of the year, these ladies are super active in the community—establishing and maintaining the Bay Area Girls Rock Camp. We're super lucky to have them around.

CENTERHITS – "City Girl Friend" EP (Snuffy Smile)
Snuffy Smile put out a hand full of totally amazing 7"s this year, but this record is far and away the best. This is totally the Japanese lady-fronted equivalent to FLESHIES *Kill the Dreamers Dream*. It's fast, poppy, sloppy, dirty and totally out of control. Sooooo good!

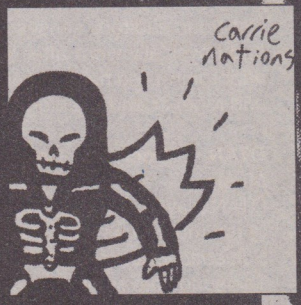
CARRIE NATIONS – "Magnum" EP (Stankhouse)
One of the best bands of last decade. If you both love grunge and pop punk, CARRIE NATIONS are your band. About eight years ago they put out a stellar LP (see my decade top ten), and a split 7" with THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB, that is nearly impossible to find. Then they broke up. Fast-forward to 2009, where the good folks at Stankhouse records dug up the masters to that split 7" and the masters of two unreleased songs (that were intended for a split 7" that never came out). Then combined all the tracks on to this marvelous piece of vinyl. And let me tell ya, it rules. The song "Magnum" is worth the price of the record alone. One of the best songs they ever wrote.

GLUE – "Still Here" EP (Rumbletowne)
Dark and gloomy yet somewhat melodic. One of the best crust-pop bands around. Or at least they were, before they broke up. The riffs totally rule and the singer delivers some of the raddest vocals; super raspy and desperate, yet aggressive. Kelly, you must start another band, if you haven't done so already.

GRASS WIDOW – LP (Make A Mess)
Last year I listed GRASS WIDOW's demo on my year end top ten, and since then they've put out two 12"s and gained a phenomenal buzz. Probably by this time next year they'll be on Kill Rock Stars or something and be international superstars. But, if anyone deserves the admiration of the thriving masses, it would be GRASS WIDOW. Probably the most talented rock band in the country. And this album is undeniably good; they create these wistful pop songs with three-part harmonies. They are the second coming of the RAINCOATS. This album is a raw slice of pure beauty.



PROLES! – "One Small Step" EP (Self Released)
Proof that you can write songs about meaningful social and political issues and be funny at the same time. All while rocking super hard. These guys are a new band out of Rockford, IL, and they write fast, snotty pop songs. Lighthearted but earnest. Melodic but dirty. It's genuine, important and totally catchy.



SHANG-A-LANG – "Sad Magic" LP (Fast Crowd)
Believe the hype. This is a great LP. This is some land-locked, cactus-juice DIY pop punk done just right. Total HICKEY-worship with equal parts MARKED MEN, BANANAS and THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB. How can you go wrong?

Honorable Mentions
(first and foremost) SILLA ELECTRICA – all the singles!!!!!!, FOREIGN OBJECTS – "Leave Me" EP, OK? – "Everything is going to be... EP, MARKED MEN – "Ghosts" LP, MASSHYSTERI – "Var Del Av Stan" LP, SHIT COUNTRY – Demo tape

XYosefX

This is my highly personal list of the best records of 2009. I was asked to only include hardcore/punk releases, so metal records didn't make the list. However, I definitely think some of the best records and tapes of the last year were recorded by bands such as Bone Awl, Teitanblood, Proclamation, Ignivomous, Katharsis, Volahn, Impiety, Tribulation, Mefitic, Arckanum, Villains, Funebrarum, Diocletian, Embrace of Thorns, and Infernal Stronghold. Also, I'm sure I missed a lot of records that I'm just not remembering, just like last year. All records are listed alphabetically.

7"s:
ACEPHALIX – "Nothing" EP (Prank)
One of the dirtiest and most brutal punk records in recent memory. Bass-heavy, thundering and totally fucked up, with some of the most gut-churning vocals of any band. Keep your eyes peeled for an LP some time this year.

COLD WORLD – "Hands Off Our Music" EP (Shortfuse)
One of the biggest surprises of the past year was this record, featuring unreleased tracks recorded fifteen years ago (minus the recently added vocal track) by the legendary Austrian fastcore machine. Simply punishing. The double 7" version features noise remixes and, despite how that probably sounds, is a total killer.

EXTORTION – "Terminal Cancer" EP (Way Back When / Shortfuse)
Are Extortion the best hardcore band in Australia right now? Quite possibly. Are they the best hardcore band in the world? Definitely a contender. Their hatred and disgust for the majority of human scum is palpable in both lyrics and music. It's a wonder they were even let into the US for their tour with the wild look in their eyes.

CHILDREN OF TECHNOLOGY / G.A.T.E.S. – split EP (High Society Satan)
Along with their country and label-mates METAL SKULL, Japan's G.A.T.E.S. has been pioneering the modern version of crossover known as "metalpunk." Unlike most original crossover, metalpunk doesn't suck

horribly. Drawing their influences liberally from metallic punks like GISM, SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS, and GBH, as well as punk-ish metal such as VENOM, BULLDOZER, and MOTORHEAD, the bands involved in the metalpunk movement have been producing a hybrid form that appeals to hellbangers and anarcho-types alike, uniting us in something more than just our love of band patches on denim. While G.A.T.E.S. has been spreading their hard-rocking gospel for over a decade, Italy's CHILDREN OF TECHNOLOGY are newcomers to the field, although you wouldn't know it listening to their track on this split. Bang your fucking head!

LOW THREAT PROFILE – "Kick My Heart" EP (Draw Blank / Deep Six)

With members of NO COMMENT, INFEST, and LACK OF INTEREST, you'd probably expect some fucking amazing, fast, ass-kicking hardcore. You'd be right. Instead of continuing in the West Coast powerviolence vein, however, the fine fellows of LOW THREAT PROFILE dug a little deeper into our collective history and came out with a 7" that's steeped in the raw sounds of early-to-mid-'80s US and UK hardcore. Honestly, this record is just about perfect. It was even worth the eight-year wait between recording and release.

MOB RULES – "The Donor" EP (Zandor / SuperFi)

Every time I throw this record on, I can't help but jump around like an idiot. Unfortunately my room is stuffed with wall-to-wall records and books, so I invariably end up jumping on my bed, which can't be good for it. Pummeling, bone-crushing, eardrum-shattering hardcore of the highest order. I expect great things form them if they don't implode first like most of the best bands.

NEVER HEALED – "Untitled" EP (Painkiller)

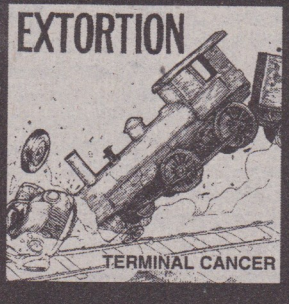
Violent fucked-up hardcore made by violent fucked-up people. Imagine a more rock 'n' roll version of CRO-MAGS with black metal vocals. Intense, brutal, and unforgiving.

OK? – "This Is Only a Test" EP (Life's a Rape / Shock! Horror!) and SURRENDER – "There Is No War" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

These bands are both so good that I couldn't decide between these two records. Both play fucking *perfect* peace punk in the old Crass Records vein, a la POISON GIRLS, THE MOB, OMEGA TRIBE, or ZOUNDS. This is the sound that got me into punk in the first place, alternating between haunting melody and violent discord, and it will always hold a special place in my heart. It's good to see bands doing it right. They definitely should do a tour together…

NUNSLAUGHTER / SYPHILITIC VAGINAS – split EP (Rescued From Life)

Most of you are probably familiar with SYPHILITIC VAGINAS and their pure GISM-worshipping ways. If not, well, they worship GISM and do it well. Enough said. Their track here is one of their better ones. NUNSLAUGHTER has been around seemingly forever, over two decades at this point. Longtime bassist and frontman Don of the Dead has been joined by Jim Sadist (of 9 SHOCKS TERROR and APARTMENT 213 infamy) on the skins for the past decade-and-a-half or so, and they've pretty much perfected their particular brand of primitive death metal (or "devil metal" as they call it), as the two songs here demonstrate. A perfect split.



VIRGIN WITCH – "The Nail of Dicara" one-sided EP (Free Cake)

Some bands only need one side of the record to utterly destroy you, and can save the other side for a screen print. This is such a band. Sadly it's just another project band, featuring members of SKIN LIKE IRON and PULLING TEETH playing some down-tuned occult crust/sludge. Hopefully they'll record some more material; this is crushing.

12"s:

A.V.O. – "Domestic Violence Kept the Neighbourhood Quiet" LP (Even Worse / Kangaroo)

Australia's A.V.O. (short for Apprehended Violence Order, a.k.a. restraining order) played hate-filled old school hardcore for over a decade. They released some legendary EPs in the process, before issuing their first (and last) full length, not long before calling it quits. They mixed the best of early New York hardcore and the ferocity of UK hardcore a la RIPCORD and played it all in an inimitably Australian fashion. You might wince at their personal politics, but you'll mosh to this album.

CAPITALIST CASUALTIES / HELLNATION – split LP (Sound Pollution / Six Weeks)

How many years ago was this split announced? I'm loathe to forgive missed deadlines, but I'll make an exception for the first CAPITALIST CASUALTIES and HELLNATION material in years. This also showcases some of the best songs both bands have recorded. This is how it's done.

HATERS – LP (At War With False Noise / Heidenwut)

This band is pretty much VOORHEES with a different vocalist. Do you need to know any more?

HATRED SURGE – "Deconstruct" LP (Rescued From Life)

Devastating stuff from these Texans, maybe their best work. They're a real band now, not just a one-man project, which makes for an entirely new dynamic. Tense, layered, and powerful, this is among the best records the band has released to date.

IRON LUNG/WALLS/PIG HEART TRANSPLANT – "Public Humiliation" LP (Iron Lung)

This isn't a split but rather a live collaboration mixing elements of all three of these overlapping projects' sound into a monstrous hardcore/noise amalgam. If this would be up your alley you probably already have a copy. Not for the squeamish or weak of heart.

MOHORAM ATTA / THOU – split LP (Halo of Flies / Feast of Tentacles)

MOHORAM ATTA, from Santa Cruz, California, was one of the heaviest, darkest hardcore bands I've ever had the pleasure of experiencing live. Their sound took elements of epic crust, powerviolence, and '90s San Diego screamo and somehow made it all work. These are their final recordings, and their most fully realized. THOU, hailing from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, has achieved a certain degree of popularity with their SABBATH and EYEHATEGOD worshipping sludge/doom and vehement anarchist politics. Two bands that complement each other perfectly, one perfect split.

PUNCH – LP (Discos Huelga / 625)

While PUNCH's demo and EP were more in the powerviolence/fastcore vein, their debut LP finds PUNCH mixing that thrash with elements of youth crew: sing-alongs, circle pits, stagedives, and fingerpointing. These kids are the best of the best at what they do.

SKIN LIKE IRON – "All Human Failings" LP (Free Cake)

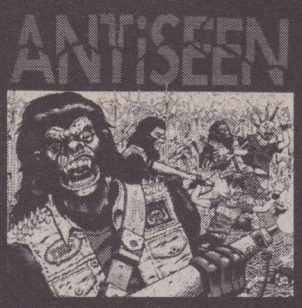
This is probably the best record to come out of the Bay Area hardcore scene in the last decade. SKIN LIKE IRON is a force to be reckoned with, and this album is their best work to date. There's a lot more going on here than just hardcore punk; this is powerful music that goes beyond genre limitations.

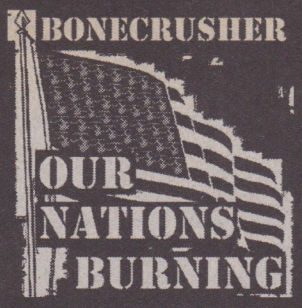
SOJOURNER – "The Narrows" LP (16oh)

Tough guy hardcore hasn't been this good since BLOOD FOR BLOOD broke up and HATEBREED tried to go metal. The best thing going this side of SHEER TERROR.

WEEKEND NACHOS – "Unforgivable" LP (Deep Six)

Depressing, misanthropic, ugly hardcore from a band with a profoundly silly name. They've branched out past their powerviolence roots here, and it's paying off in spades. One of my favorite Deep Six releases in a while.





Bruce Roehrs

BONECRUSHER – "Our Nations Burning" 10" (Longshot)
Fucking A! BONECRUSHER destroyed the United States of America in 2009! Longshot Music issued a stunning BONECRUSHER 10" called *Our Nations Burning*. This slab will blow your fucking head off! *Our Nations Burning* demonstrates the brute-force power of southern California's reigning kings of brutal punk! This shit is so dangerous, so positively lethal—your blood will curdle! BONECRUSHER slams your skull right away with the title track, "Our Nations Burning"—definitely the best Oi! song of the decade! BONECRUSHER has demonstrated their skinhead rock superiority again and again over the last eighteen years and this new ten-inch drives the point home. After "Our Nations Burning," BONECRUSHER fucking crush you with "Under Suspicion (For a Crime I Didn't Do)." Fucking great! Side two offers more Oi! anthems titled "Remember" and "Last Man Standing". This record is great! Contact Longshot Music at: www.longshotmusic.com

ANTISEEN/BRODY'S MILITIA – Split EP (Haunted Hotel)
A winning combination would be a split EP featuring ANTISEEN from North Carolina/South Carolina and BRODY'S MILITIA from Ohio. Well, you fucks are in luck! Just such a split appeared in 2009! Side A features the kings of the Confederacy Of Scum, ANTISEEN, with a three-song blast that will burn your goddamn ears off. The "Doomsday Intro" is a tuned-up version of the intro to the pro-war anthem "Pledge Allegiance to the Bomb" from the ANTISEEN LP *Ambassadors Of Bad Will*. ANTISEEN starts out with an amazing cover of "Fix Me" by BLACK FLAG, recorded in all it's glory by Mr. Jon Bowman and Mr. Eddie Ford at Mr. Joe Young's Repo-Depot record store in Lenoir, North Carolina. ANTISEEN rumble through live versions of "Nothing's Cool" and "I Don't Ask You For Nothing". Fucking great! On side B you get BRODY'S MILITIA storming through "Won't Change A Thing", "Carry On Mumbling", "Same Shit, Different Dress Code" and "Far Away From Here." Yes! BRODY'S MILITIA are the kings of Ohio scum-punk – BRODY'S MILITIA remain a national treasure, undiscovered by many but revered by those that are cogniscent of true rock'n'roll brilliance! Contact Haunted Hotel Records: PO Box 348, Yonkers, NY 10700, hauntedhotelrecords@yahoo.com

HARRINGTON SAINTS – "Dead Broke In The USA" LP (Longshot / Contra)
Fuck yes! All the punks and skins in the San Francisco/Bay Area are celebrating the release of the new HARRINGTON SAINTS full-length! The "*Dead Broke In The USA*" LP is chock full of skinhead anthems! The title track "Dead Broke In The USA" is clearly one of the best skinhead rock songs of the decade! You will pump your fist in the air through "Pub Song" and then you get to "Bootstraps." This fucking song will get your knees coming up of the bar stool! "Bootstraps" gives you the positive thoughts to pick yourself up, dust yourself off and keep moving forward! "Guilty" and "Riot City Dublin" finish off side A nicely. Side B starts with "Working Class Friday Night." This fucking song really gets your blood flowing! The HARRINGTON SAINTS sing: "Well I don't give a damn what tomorrow's got planned / I've been workin' hard everyday / With my boots just shined and my hair cut right / I don't care what you got to say / Me and the boys makin' all the noise!"… Yes sir!! That's a great song!! Song two on side B keeps the skinhead rock momentum with "Let's Go:" "Let's go, let's go / Someday boys we're gonna have it all! / Saturday rollin' with the boys / We're gonna hit the town tonight! / Dressed down, gonna kill with style / We're gonna light it up tonight / Cashed up, gonna rear it down – ain't nothin' gonna stop us now!" Fuck yes! That's another great song! Next up you get the sprightly, fast-paced "Fistful Of Brass:" "You are in my way –you'll drop!". Next up, "Kings' Schilling" continues the first-rate rock'n'roll and the great lyrics. Read on: "Born into nothin', he had no chance in life / He could see the doors close, right before his eyes / Won't take a handout / Won't take charity / He's a working class hero / For hundreds of years it's always been the same / Rich get richer and the poor take the blame." Fuckin' A! The last song on *Dead Broke In The USA* is "A Nation Divided" and has some great lyrics: "Surrounded by a culture of fear / Makes you wanna get the fuck outta here! / Manufacturer of an economic prison – planned destruction of an entire system." Fuck yes! The players in the HARRINGTON SAINTS are: Darrel Wojick on vocals, Mike C. is the fucking lead guitar virtuoso and backing vocals, Jayson Shepard on rhythm guitar and backing vocals, Deuce on bass and Forrest Maestretti on drums. These guys have collectively put together one of the most cohesive, most intelligent skinhead rock outfits in the entire USA!! Contact Longshot Music at: www.longshotmusic.com

NEVER HEALED – "Untitled I / Untitled II" (Painkiller)
NEVER HEALED changed the face of Bay Area rock'n'roll forever! You get Casey's maniacal singing and some of the best guitar/bass/drum playing ever witnessed in the western United States. These two songs have a driving hardcore force like no other! In "Untitled One," NEVER HEALED postulates "We have built mountains of graves – follow the void to infinities of emptiness… The hills of crosses bring immortality / Robes of fire burn bright, illuminating the sky – supernovas of hatred and despair." Fuck yes! NEVER HEALED has the brute strength to pull you in! Contact Painkiller Records at: www.painkiller.com.

HAMMER AND THE NAILS – "Set To Ruin" Demo CD
The hardest Oi! band to come out of Boston in quite awhile is HAMMER AND THE NAILS!! HAMMER AND THE NAILS has a brutal four-song attack available as a demo on Rock'n'Roll Disgrace Records. The *Set To Ruin* CD has that fucking rock and roll enthusiasm coursing through its veins. HAMMER AND THE NAILS starts the blood flowing with "Product Of This Modern Age". Fuck! This shit is great! A favorable comparison could be made to LAST RESORT or COMBAT 84. Brilliant! Read some of the lyrics to "Product Of A Modern Age:" "He turned his back for a greater sin / Abandoned God and country / He defected to the other side / Now they claim unfair treatment of the lowest scum who deserves no better / He's a product of this modern age / What do we show mercy for? / String him up and let him die! / Lock him up and throw away the key / He was bereft of a parent's guidance / Free to explore the evil and absurd / Unknowing to his family and all of the ilk / Had to prove that he was a 'bad boy' / Found a loop-hole, a means of escaping the punishment doled out by the other side / Pleading as a victim – fundamentalist pawn / But no one forced him to take up arms… / String him up and let him die, or lock him up and throw away the key!" Yes! Strong lyrics to a fucking great Oi! song! Song two is equally stunning! HAMMER AND THE NAILS present "Dirty Cop." This fucker gives off sparks! Two great comparisons come to mind – the TEMPLARS and BONECRUSHER!! That's high praise! The lyrics to "Dirty Cop" make it very clear how HAMMER AND THE NAILS feel about the cops: "Out in the streets, it's your word against ours and you know who they're gonna believe / You're a dirty cop – shoot 'em in the back / Cold steel to the back of the head / You can simply take a life / Tamper with evidence – you're a dirty cop… / You're above the law / It only takes one rat to blow your cover / Then the scales are tipped / You're at the other end of the law / You're a dirty cop – shoot 'em in the back!!". Song number three is "Legislation, No Rehabilitation" with more fine-tuned Oi! music. Read some of the bitter lyrics to this great skinhead rock: "Low life scum – friend to no one / Creeps about at night – waiting till the time is right / Now he strikes – with a perverts might, but she sees his face later in

a lineup / she points him out / He's found guilty – does his time with no parole and his rehabilitation is just a joke / They make him register in every town he goes, but he's got his freedom and he will do it again / Not enough enforcement – too many criminal rights! / His cycle of violence continues each and every night / Now it's on us – to apply more pressure / More legislation – to stop repeat offenders or we'll take it in our own hands!!" Whoa! Those are intense lyrics!! The last song on the HAMMER AND THE NAILS demo CD is "Set To Ruin." This song kicks a whole truck-load of skinhead butt! The hardened Oi! music is accompanied by some deep thoughts. Read these succinct lyrics: "I don't know what I'm doing / My life is set to ruin / Got to settle down – break away – get away / I can take the pain, but not the stress / Weaker men have taken their lives for less / Why does everything have to be a test? / Well, I think I failed – but I gave my best!". This is a spectacular skinhead rock'n'roll demo! Contact HAMMER AND THE NAILS at: rnrdisgrace@gmail.com

SACRED SHOCK – "You're Not With Us" LP (Residue)
SACRED SHOCK released the *You're Not With Us* LP in 2009. This ear-damaging punk-rock explosion of ideas will grab you by the cerebellum!! Songs that make you think include: "Blur Of Reality:" "I can't think – I can't sleep / Don't want to talk to anyone / Continuous descent / Why do I even wake up?" And in "Closed Doors:" "Be nice – get ignored / Work hard —get fired / Lend a hand—lose it all." And on "New Medium", "What's next? / Brace for the worst as technology gets ahead of us." Next is "Compound Life." "What do we fight for? Why do we compete? Does it make a difference?" Then on "Dume": "Behead my enemies – drawn and quartered / Crucified and tortured, all their horrified faces on stakes." Fuck! That is a sample of the dark and bleak lyrics that compose this punk masterpiece! All this horror is delivered with aplomb by Mr. Logan Worrell, Mr. Alex Hughes, Mr. Hans Zimmerman and Mr. Matt Badenhop. The deep vocals are absolutely mind-numbing! The guitars scream and wail with lots of different sounds. Bass and drums abound! Fucking rough-hewn Texas-style punk! No quarter will be asked—or given! Obtain this excellent record from: residuerecords@gmail.com

COCKSPARRER – "Here We Stand" LP (Pirate's Press)
Hey skins and punks! Surely you dribble-dick losers have heard the COCKSPARRER "Here We Stand" LP by now… You snot-nosed little rodents need to know this: The record of the year was clearly this new COCKSPARRER LP!! On "To Little Too Late" these veteran punks sing: "I'll bet you think it will be forgotten / No way – too much too little too late!" You can clearly see that a bitter, unforgiving attitude prevails. Some other outstanding tunes on the "Here We Stand" LP are "Be True To Yourself" and "Did You Have A Good Life Without Me". Get this record from Pirates Press Records now!! Contact: www.piratespressrecords.com

WORLD BURNS TO DEATH – "The War Can Go On Forever" EP (HG:Fact)
Fuck yes! WORLD BURNS TO DEATH has released a ferocious new seven-inch record for you fucks! This monster 45 is "*The War Can Go On Forever*." Accompanying the brute tumult of raw music are great lyrics. Read these lines: "I have always thought it unfair that the old never get the chance to die in the wars / Never get the chance to glory their names in a history written in children's blood… / Wasting all that death on the hopes of the young / This war can go on forever and ever." Those are fucking poignant lyrics about fat-cat Pentagon-types who send eighteen-year-old kids to fight futile battles in far away countries where the USA has no business interfering! Let those feudal regimes kill each other as they have for a thousand years or more. Side two of this brilliant slice of vinyl is "Black Becomes The Sun" with some very bleak words. Read this: "Black becomes the sun's beams / It sates itself on the life blood… / Brother will fight brother / It is harsh in this world with whoredom rife." Yes! Those are tragic observations! The deep, gruff vocals of Jeff (SEVERED HEAD OF STATE) in WORLD BURNS TO DEATH are punctuated by sterling fast speed-punk-metal guitar leads. A powerful bass and drum combination anchors this dangerous sound! The rough-hewn music works well with the dark lyrics of WORLD BURNS TO DEATH.

HAMMERLOCK – "Let The Bad Times Roll"
HAMMERLOCK, Oakland's Confederacy Of Scum kings have ten songs available for download entitled *Let The Bad Times Roll* The songs offered are: "Later Than You Think", "The Plague Of Weakness", "Felt That Way For A Day", "Keeping My Powder Dry", "38-44", "I Reject It", "Chemical Straightjacket", "Soon I Will Be Free" (co-written with Mr. Simon Stokes), "Drive On" and "Sleepless Sunrise". All ten of these songs are destined to be classic HAMMERLOCK anthems. Several tunes jump out at you immediately. "Felt That Way For A Day", "38-44" and "I Reject It" are three such songs. Contact: www.hammerlock.us and then click on shop, and finally click on download.

BRAIN KILLER – Demo EP (Deranged/ Vinyl Rites)
Yes! Fucking BRAIN KILLER from Allston, Mass. in conjunction with Deranged Records from Canada has more brutal hardcore for you fucks! The record is from BRAIN KILLER's demo cassette recorded February 23rd, 2008. Jeff (guitar), Marcus (vocals), Dominick (drums) and Ryan (bass) punish you with a barrage of heavy artillery right from the second the needle touches down. On "The Breaking Wheel" the cheerful lyrics are: "Bones breaking, skulls crushed / Skin torn from the bone / Your screams were never heard". Fuck yes!! Next BRAIN KILLER pummels you with "Eyes On" stating: "Extreme paranoia based on evidence" —now there's a painful truth!! Next you listen to "Religion, Refuge And Kidnapping" and then plunge right into the mire with "Made:" "We sit and stare wasting away / Wishing everything was true / Reality is our disease." Those are rough lyrics! BRAIN KILLER has a fucking kill-em-all cassette tape in circulation that is damn near impossible to obtain. You obsessive collector nerds should contact your favourite BRAIN KILLER band member with the appropriate bribe (read: drugs & alcohol) and the mandatory submissive posture (read: pathetic groveling) to secure your copy. The cassette contains crazy over-the-top, unhinged live songs and following the live material you get some crazed, very fast, manic punk-rock covers. You will hear "Johnny Got His Gun" by NAUSEA, "Big Sky" by HÜSKER DU, "Killing Machine" and "Society System" by THE PARTISANS and "Boiling Point" by SS DECONTROL. This fucked up punk-rock shit will blow holes in your head worthy of a twelve gauge firing slugs.

LOW THREAT PROFILE – "Kick My Heart" EP (Deep Six)
Yes! Draw Blank Records in conjunction with Deep Six Records has released a hardcore record that might just destroy your little world! The new EP is by LOW THREAT PROFILE and the hardcore music delivered here is relentless! Andy of NO COMMENT sings, Matt of INFEST is on bass and guitar duties and Bob of LACK OF INTEREST plays drums. You get ten songs of take-no-prisoners style hardcore! The singing is maniacal shit— clearly possessed by another power. Guitars and drums punctuate the frantic explosion! You begin with "Kick My Heart" which is a lovely song with lyrics such as: "You drain me – pull me under / Make me sink to an all time low – break me down". Those are reflections of a love gone bad! On song two the hardcore mayhem continues with more lyrics about a failed relationship with "Rebirth." This loud, fast number sings about: "Pick myself up and wipe off your shit / Enough has been swallowed / It's time for rebirth." Song three on side A features more brilliant hardcore with intelligent lyrics. Read some of the very personal insights in "I'm Not Perfect:" "Point your finger—judgment passed / I'm not ashamed of the things that I have done / I'm not perfect and neither are you / Let's put your record on display and let me be the judge, jury and executioner." Yes! Anybody that's been in "love" can relate to those lyrics! Sad but true! We continue through "Corporate Cash Lies" about how large capitalist enterprise manipulates people. "Lessons In Cruelty" has some words of wisdom for you: "Sessions in bloodshed / Lessons of cruelty / Knowledge is power / Wisdom brings us release – a new way of thinking…" Fuck yes! This devastating hardcore record has great words to make you think! We surge on through to "Distance Yourself" with "no more facades – no more games." Next up is "Nobody Fears You" with lyrics illustrating a situation we all have gone through: "Huff and puff – nobody can see you bitch and moan / Nobody cares / Scream and shout – Nobody hears you / Punch and kick – nobody fears you / You spend most of your life trying to prove you're the man, but deep inside you know that you're a piece of shit – just a little fuck." Yes! Those lyrics will emasculate any tough guy poser that happens to cross into your world! We travel through "Southern Hospitality" and "Ripe" and arrive at "Product Number One." Some of the words are: "You've lost your ideals – where has your spirit gone? / You've become a king of an empire of wax / Actually you're just a sitting duck in your bedroom". Wow! Those are harsh comments for the major label money-grubbers! The last song is "The Well Seasoned Whore" with hateful lyrics that go like this: "Sat back from afar as I've watched you fuck me / Creative theft / Sucked dry / Crimes committed / You move on / You seasoned whore / You are a parasite!" That lyric contains a lot of bitterness—things did not end well! The music and the lyrics of this EP make it essential! Contact Deep Six Records.

VACANT STATE – "Internal Conflict" EP (Deranged)
Fuck! VACANT STATE fuck your shit up! Side A starts with a frantic forty-seven second ripper called "Obsessive/Compulsive Disorder." Fuck! This aural mess segues right into "What Right?" This is ugly punk with gruff singing that is some of the best in the business! As great as "What Right?" is, you cannot be prepared for the scalding riffs of "No Say." This shit is some of the most crazed punk available in the northern hemisphere!! "Vile" finishes off side A with a slower menacing groove. This crap is guaranteed to make you uncomfortable! Side B is five minutes of doom and gloom. Let's play side A again!

WOLFBRIGADE – "Comalive" LP (Deranged/ Farewell)
WOLFBRIGADE unleashed their violent *Comalive* disc last year! These Swedish fuckers are as heavy as any band currently destroying the airwaves! WOLFBRIGADE pulverizes you from the get-go with "In Adrenalin:" "Shattered nerves / Screaming din / My blood turns cold / Beneath my skin". In "Ride For A Fall", WOLFBRIGADE sings "Eyes turn blind – mind gone numb / Out of shape – state of the ape." Fuck yes! With Micke on vocals, Jocke on guitar, Eric on guitar, Johan on bass and Dadde on drums, this band has been doing this shit for nigh on to fifteen years. The line-ups have included members of ASTA KASK and ANTI-CEMEX. They are the masters of this hardcore – hard-nosed, Swedish hardcore/d-beat perfection!! The powerful crunch of vocals, guitar, bass and drum ultra-violence will reduce you to protoplasm!! On side two, WOLFBRIGADE continues the onslaught with "Barren Dreams": "Echoing thoughts / Insignificant dreams / Clutching fists in barren dreams / Bringer of life, dealer of death." Holy fuck! In "Web Of Lies," Micke and company posit, "In your self-made misery you revel in lies and hypocrisy – betraying your own kind. Envy will be your demise." Fuck! Those are good lyrics!! In the last song on the *Comalive* LP by WOLFBRIGADE, the following truths are laid out: "Reality lashes / Fallen to pieces / Crushing black void / Torn apart / Cold elusive world / Starry-eyes hopes – wasted a long time ago". WOLFBRIGADE remains a hardcore force to be reckoned with! Contract Deranged Records at: www.derangedrecords.com.

Chris Corry

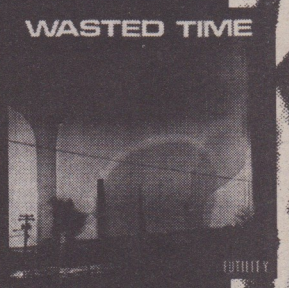
Full-Lengths:
1) PAINTBOX – "Trip Trance Traveling" LP (HG FACT / Prank)
This is the most challenging PAINTBOX work to date, and a fitting final entry in guitarist Chelsea's long and intimidating Japanese hardcore legacy. More than ever *Trip Trance and Traveling* stretches beyond the typical hardcore confines into the worlds of JPop and Pscyh-Rock to bring you, the listener, transcendent moments of beauty, power, and joy. All this, with the things you already have come to know PAINTBOX for: their dignity, their nobility of character, their commanding presence and their instrumental prowess. This is not a strictly punk record by any means, but it's the most impressive, uncompromising, and ambitious musical statement of the year. R.I.P. Chelsea.

2) HATRED SURGE – "Deconstruct" LP (Rescued From Life)
Grindcore in 2009, a tricky proposition. The same legacies can only get defiled and violated so many times before we're all just beating off on a dead horse. Thankfully Austin's (formerly Houston's) HATRED SURGE understand this. This is well beyond their earlier more traditionally Grindcore and Powerviolence entries. It's a seamless blend of things like DESPISE YOU, ASSUCK, MITB, and CROSSED OUT, but with every bit its own flavor and delivery.

3) IRON AGE – "The Sleeping Eye" (Cyclopean / TeePee)
Taking the crossover sounds of thrash era COC, *Best Wishes* era CRO MAGS and the ICEMEN and shooting off into space with psychedelic repetition and riff oblivion, Iron Age haven't taken the most obvious route. Each of these songs are a riff feast, bludgeoning you with heavier than heavy until you submit. Some people might argue this doesn't belong on a punk records list, but with all the stinking stench crust and garage/basement indie that some of you dummies are going to include, I think this one should be allowed.

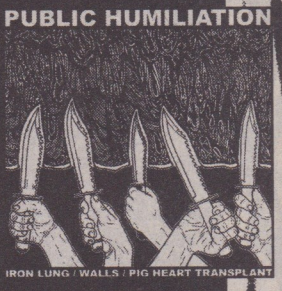
4) DRY-ROT – "Philistine" LP (Parts Unknown)
I've loved 'em since first heard them, and *Philistine* only emphasizes more reasons as to why I do. Ramshackle and loose like the first MEAT PUPPETS single or FANG, sometimes even UNITED MUTATION or NO TREND, this record shreds, only relenting when it breaks into soundtrack style cuts reminiscent of ANGELO BADALMENTI, which mostly serves to throw the uglier moments into even sharper relief. There's no pose here, this is an autobiographical record, and it tells a story of self hate in spite of being filled with love. Yes, of course it's more meaningful than 100 boring "smash the government" records and "I hate my parents" 7"s that stupid babies churn out every day. Did you even have to ask or wonder that?

5) MAMMOTH GRINDER – "Extinction Of Humanity" LP (Cyclopian)
Probably the best surprise this year for me, insofar as "*who are these guys? they're really good.*" I've been saying this sounds a lot like TERRORIZER "World Downfall" without blast beats, and while that might seem like a strange description, because blasting is what TERRORIZER is known for, MAMMOTH GRINDER really do sound that way. Driving furious heavy as fuck hardcore. You'll hear more from these guys.



6) WASTED TIME – "Futility" LP (No Way)
Steamrolling old style USHC. I've thought these guys kind of bring in some LAST RIGHTS, and some BATTALION OF SAINTS since their last 7", and this pretty much holds to my theory. Driving hardcore with some fast and some mid-paced stuff. It's nothing you haven't heard before but it's done totally awesome, and recorded well, and the songs are great; meat and potatoes to the max, but sometimes that's all you need.

7) SYSTEMATIC DEATH – "Systema 6" CD (Annie's Full Swing)
Old masters return to show everyone how it's done. This is a little bit modernized but basically in the same vein as SYSTEMATIC DEATH'S classic *Final Insider* 12". Full tilt thrashing Japanese hardcore, there's not much I can say except that it rips start to finish, and is one of the better "reunion" albums I've ever heard. We need to get this out on vinyl folks!



8) URBAN BLIGHT – "More Reality" LP (Slasher)
Five years later these guys return with a new slab of primitive STRAIGHT AHEAD meets the ABUSED meets DYS haaaaaardcore. thirty second songs, great stomping mosh parts, brutal head in a vice vocals... Something they've added to the mix though is a wall of extra fuzz. This is one of the most blown out recordings I've heard this side of DISCLOSE in a long while. Every element is peaked way into the red and I think it totally works. A new variation on a classic formula. Even the lowest fidelity recordings from the early '80s never got this dirty.

9) IRON LUNG WALLS PIG HEART TRANSPLANT – "Public Humiliation" LP (Iron Lung)
IRON LUNG, WALLS, and PIG HEART TRANSPLANT combining like Voltron to play each other's songs in more menacing and frightening ways. This was recorded live at a show, but it's an incredibly well done recording. This shit is fucking frightening, treading into territory well worn by RORSCHACH, GODFLESH, DEAD AND GONE, MITB... Most of all though it just sounds like a collision of the three bands that are sharing their songs together.

10) ANXIETY "Pathetic" 12" (Social Napalm)
This is the drummer of the band SCAPEGOAT performing some of the most obnoxious low brow hardcore I've heard in a while. Actually I first heard this when it was brought to my house on a

4 track cassette and I set to mixing it with its creator. The big influence is early RUPTURE but you can also hear DISORDER, RIPCORD, and probably more. There's a HEADCLEANERS cover too. Songs about exterminating all humans, and things like that, fucked up guitar and drum sounds, lots of echo on the vocals. It's almost like if the INMATES done Aussie style. Fuckin' great.

7"s:

1) LOW THREAT PROFILE – "Kick My Heart" EP (Deep 6)
Long awaited is an understatement. I've been foaming at the mouth for this since the *Reality #4* comp hit the streets in '02 I think. Three dudes, that between them have been members of NO COMMENT, MITB, INFEST, NEANDERTHAL, and LACK OF INTEREST, ripping out fast thrashing HC exactly like that pedigree would lead you to expect. Really I've been saying this sounds a bit like CAPITALIST CASUALTIES as well as NO COMMENT to my ears. Absolute PV perfection.

2) CROW – "Flock of Beast" (Prank) and CROW / SEE YOU IN HELL – split EP (Insane Society / Phobia)
CROW continue to demonstrate why they're the top of the heap and better than ever as far as the Japanese HC scene goes. "*Flock of Beast Part One"* is such a mindblowingly perfect anthem from the first minute; it's impossible to not play it five times over immediately. Crushingly heavy metallic hardcore in the burning spirits tradition, soaring leads... all the good stuff you want.

3) FRAMTID / PISSCHRIST – split (HG:Fact)
Two D-beat heavy hitters on one record. FRAMTID return with three new ones and some of their most guttural tortured vocals to date. PISSCHRIST have, in my opinion, their best showing since their early EPs. The bottom line: both show up and perform at the top of their abilities playing thick and heavily distorted dis-core to pump your fist.

4) EXTORTION / JED WHITEY – split EP (Distort), EXTORTION / RUPTURE – split EP (Hate Ape), EXTORTION / SEPTIC SURGE – split EP (RSR)
Extortion's been getting split happy the last year or so, and despite it being challenging to keep up, they've maintained their place as the foremost and fastest PV influenced HC. They offer absolutely no innovation or glimpse of anything new on these records. Just a whirlwind of CAP CAS, VOORHEES, RUPTURE, RIPCORD-style speed and stomp. One of the most consistent HC bands around these days.

5) IRON LUNG – "Exposed" EP (Iron Lung)
A few new cuts from IRON LUNG including a SEX/VID cover. There's only one band that sounds like IRON LUNG, and that's IRON LUNG so there's not a lot more I can say about them at this point. Love it as usual.

6) VACCINE – "Demo" EP (Clean Plate)
Outta nowhere my buddy Bill Killings told me he had a new, "Straightedge PV band" and I was like "*Word*?! send me that shit." Lo and behold, a two and a half minute, five song demo, which soon found its way onto a 1 sided 7". Wasteful? Maybe if this wasn't so perfectly raging awesome. A great beginning and one of the only good straight edge bands around right now. Quick burning NO COMMENT-esque power bombs, and lyrics about shit that I can actually agree with. Yeah drugs still suck, and smoking is a habit that's like taking a shit in your own mouth.

7) RHYTHM SYNDROM – "Cobwebs From The Empty Skull" EP (Cowabunga)
I don't know anything about this band, but I think they're rather overlooked at the moment. I do know that this record has totally great sloppy tape hissing NEOS style thrashin' tunes and I just really dig the vibe. Seemingly the type of band that does not give a fuck. Again really enjoyed this one, would like to hear more.

8) FLYIN TRICHECOS – "Tri-Tri-Tricheco" EP (Non-Commercial / Proud To Be Idiot / Distort)
A "members of..." band, but members of bands I like a lot, and sounding as obnoxious as I expect from a band with members of CIDER, the GRABBIES, the DARVOCETS, MIDNIGHT, etc. It's disrespectful to hardcore, it's disrespectful to punk, it's disrespectful to the human race. Everything I need.

9) NEEDLES – "Desastre" EP (Lengua Armada)
A return from these folks from the Bay. Dark frantic blown out hardcore, with some harsh vocals and over-before-they-start HC tracks. Only just got this the other day so I'm not sure I've really digested it, but it sounds great. Almost on an OUT COLD tip at points but also bringing to mind some of the member's previous groups (TALK IS POISON, LOS CRUDOS).

10) FAILURES – "I'm Busy" EP (Painkiller)
Giving myself a little lip service here, at least for helping to get this released. Four songs of retro but still "in-the-now" hardcore stripped to the bone, and played with frantic conviction. The playing on this is just absolutely manic and furious, like everyone is trying to play the songs as fast as they possibly can without totally derailing.

Bob Goldie

As we close out another year of amazing punk and hardcore releases, I'm feeling a bit anxious regarding the future of punk music. We all know that nothing lasts more than a few years before it becomes a mockery of itself; '60s punk became boring hippie country music; late '70s power pop became MTV flavored shit like Huey Lewis; early '80s hardcore turned into horrendous crossover metal that appealed to jocks. You get the idea. We've had an impressive run of bands in the last few years, primarily reinventing the classic sounds of '70s and '80s punk/hardcore, but that time is seemingly coming to pass. Are we in for another musical Dark Age? Man, I hope not. Here are ten outstanding records that came out in the last year to keep me going for now.

DIRECT CONTROL – "Farewell" LP (Feral Ward)
From one of the finest groups to emerge during the inspiring hardcore revival of the last few years comes their paramount release to end their reign on a high note. DIRECT CONTROL helped bring back the sound, attitude, and aesthetic—though simultaneously creating something original and relevant—of traditional hardcore; and *Farewell*, which is musically in the same frenzied area as BATTALLION OF SAINTS and KORO, is the perfect sendoff for the band. This is the way to go out, by leaving behind something remarkable and then stopping.

ESTRANGED – "Type Foundry Session 1" LP (Dirtnap / Black Water)
The ESTRANGED plays gloomy, moody punk that brings to mind the rainy Pacific Northwest: industrial blight, abandoned towns, and a bit of depression. OK, fuck it, I'll say it—these dudes sound a lot like the WIPERS. But it's unfair to dismiss them as a copycat band because there is an impressive air of inventiveness and aptitude that makes these songs just as fine as anything ol' Greg Sage would pen (well, almost). The album is a collection of singles that, in my opinion, sound better bunched together like this, into a long player. This stuff will grow on you.

MARKED MEN – "Ghosts" LP (Dirtnap)
This is a band that has been around for a while and it's nice to see them get all the highly deserved accolades lately. These dudes are power pop/punk perfection, and I truly feel sorry for those who haven't tuned into the MARKED MEN yet. They remind me of a punk CHEAP TRICK, and every time I listen to them I'm seriously dumbfounded with how freakin' good they are. All of their albums are amazing and this newest one just might be the best of the lot.

MASSHYSTERI – "Var Del Av Stan" LP (Feral Ward)
If you're like me and think that the VICIOUS of Sweden

was one of the best bands of the last decade, then surely you already know of MASSHYSTERI, which is largely the same group. I can't even begin to explain just how fucking killer this group is. Every song on this debut LP is melodic, catchy, and very reminiscent of late '70s Californian punk, when some pioneering bands—particularly X—incorporated hints of traditional rock 'n roll, surf, and country (the smallest bit of country, mind you, just a fragment of twang) into punk music. Several times I've found myself flipping the album over to side one again after listening to the whole thing because it's so good. Brilliant.

VACANT STATE – "Statement of Confusion" EP (self-released)
Here's a clip of my original review for this fantastic fucking EP since it pretty much sums it up: "VACANT STATE delivers the pure hardcore goods, in attitude, in sound, and in aesthetic, especially if you dig straight up early '80s USHC. You could file this four track slab right between the NEGATIVE FX LP and the IMPACT UNIT EP, if you needed a reference. It ain't necessarily retro, though, just real hardcore."

WASTED TIME – "Futility" LP (Grave Mistake)
This LP is a bit more brutal and heavy than the first two EP's (which are friggin' mandatory, by the way); it's just what I need when I'm loathing humanity while walking the city streets and listening on my headphones. WASTED TIME plays raw hardcore that has the feel of early '80s sounds like NIHILISTICS and POISON IDEA, and some later '80s stuff like OUTBURST and SLAPSHOT: a perfect combination.

AIRES & GRACES – "What Happened to the Kids" EP (Longshot)
I was immediately hooked on this record when I first heard it about a year ago and I've been keeping my eye out ever since for any new material by this band. I'm extremely picky when it comes to "street punk" music because most of it bores the crap out of me, but man, AIRES & GRACES is right up there with the BELTONES or even OFF WITH THEIR HEADS, combining gruff, anger, and melody into a perfect set of songs. Don't let this already hard-to-find EP pass you by.

NO TOLERANCE – "Boston Straight Edge" EP (540)
There's nothing wrong with wearing your influence blatantly on your sleeve, is there? I mean, fuck, "No Tolerance" was the slogan for BROTHERHOOD and this EP could almost pass as some lost recording by that legendary band. Is that so wrong? Maybe, but it sounds fucking awesome and I love it.

SOCIAL CIRCKLE – "City Shock" LP (No Way)
A lot of times it seems that when a band that has put out a couple of incredible EPs takes the logical step into LP territory, they fall flat. Thankfully that's not the case here. SOCIAL CIRCKLE takes the snotty and fast approach, similar to early CIRCLE JERKS and ADOLESCENTS, but doesn't really sound like any band in particular. All the instruments stand out in this band, like you can really hear a variation of notes and styles being played by each member. And the lyrics are cool, too. What else could you ask for?

BLANK STARE – LP (Third Party)
After a few killer EPs, BLANK STARE did the nearly impossible and put out a full length hardcore album that smokes from beginning to end. Imagine YOUTH OF TODAY stripped of all posi-core foolishness mixed with the anger and intensity of INFEST. That's magnificence in my eyes.

Martin Sorrendeguy

Here is a list of bands and records that bring comfort to my life. One may laugh and think "comfort?" Yes, comfort—realizing that this punk world can still produce some severe audio damage that makes folks like me smile, and once again be happy that punk is still alive and ready to fuck us all up. I love this shit. I must say coming up with ten is challenging and too many made it close to getting mentioned, but ten is ten and that is what you get.

DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
I already wrote about *Atrapados* in my top ten of the decade. I revealed my admiration and endless worship of DESTINO FINAL and this LP. *Atrapados* is a massive dosage of power on a single piece of wax that many are not able to accomplish. Great!

VAASKA – LP (Todo Destruido / 540)
A prime example of bringing the noisy D-beat and adding your own touches to produce a hard-hitter. This 12" is very well done and kicks some crusty ass, seriously.

WASTED TIME – "Futility" LP (Grave Mistake)
The vocals are massive on this recording as well as all the other elements. I believe it is the perfect balance of all the ingredients that make *Futility* such a worthwhile listen. Completely powerful music that knocks into you the second the needle drops.

COMPLICATIONS – LP (Feral Ward)
Love it or hate it, a record that makes me get in a "zone." I like the drone-induced riffs and that the drums hold a beat for lengthy periods of time, which trap me into listening and actually getting lost in thought. There is something special about music that does this.

WARCRY – "Nausea" EP (Warcry)
Live and on record WARCRY has been pumping our some charging noise that smacks all in its reach right in the face. Driving doses of sound that gets in people's heads.

ELLOS AUN VIVEN – "Aunque No Seamos Nadie, Señores, Esta Es la Justicia Que Le Pedimos" EP (Sin Temores / Discos Huayno Amargo)
Peruvian hardcore punk noise. Although ELLOS AUN VIVEN was from the '90s their EP finally got to see the light of day this year. Sonically desperate with an attitude, which makes a great punk record. Simply perfect, killer!

D-CLONE / MÖRPHEME – split EP (Mouse)
As I get older I feel that my taste in music gets more and more fucked up. I was impressed by both bands—both are aggressive and distorted. Cool release.

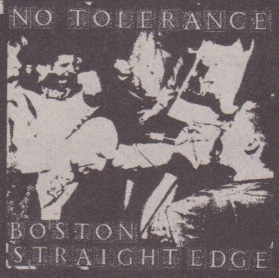
NERVESKADE – "Acid Attak" EP (Whisper in Darkness)
Chaos!!! I was quite blown away by NERVESKADE, especially live. I think *Acid Attak* is a cacophony of craziness that noise freaks love bouncing around to. Great shit.

OTAN – "Sociedad Despreciable" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
A slice of the current sonic beatings that the world has had to endure coming out of Spain. OTAN is just a sampling of the awesome shit happening in Spanish punk.

FRAMTID / PISSCHRIST – split EP (H:G Fact)
Tag-team of fist-pumping insanity. Out of Australia and Japan come two amazing representatives that end up shitting out a bomb blast of ferocious hardcore/crust. The only thing I would say I don't like about both these bands is the smell at their shows. Otherwise, sonically amazing!!!!!

DRÖMDEAD – "Donde Esta Du Dios?" EP (Moo Cow)
What? Who said only ten? Ok, I have to just say the DRÖMDEAD *Donde Esta Du Dios* EP is fucking killer! These Venezuelan punks killed it like no others from their part of the world. Distored, jaw-tensing hardcore.

Ryan Murphy



A list of any sort is difficult to do, let alone of favorite records. So I've made it easy on myself, these are the best releases of 2009 that spent the most time on my turntable. There are plenty of better records that came out, but to measure the best for me…I listened to these the most often with no objections! A bakers dozen…here ya have it!

MOB RULES – "The Donor" EP (Zandor / SuperFi)
Possibly the best "outta nowhere" review record I've ever gotten. I distinctly remember throwing this EP on at *MRR* for my March of '09 review session and thinking about how this would be on my year end best list. The whole record is a total onslaught of nasty aggression and cadence pumped out in fits of rage and anger. Musically *soooo* tight and damaged it seems to fall apart as it seamlessly holds together. No time is given to find a stale sound or boring moment, each instant paints the listener into another corner of frustration and boiling fury. All in all the collection of songs are what you'd want a powerviolence record to sound like, front to back it is a barrage of anxiety, fear, pain and pleasure. The music is written with heavy doses of absolute frantic intensity and the vocals are delivered in similar fashion! Holy smokes!

HARPOON GUNS – "Nanonii" EP (Going Underground)
This record makes me wanna dance, snarl and spit. I wanna wear fucking black and piss in public. I wanna wear a big button that says "FUCK YOU" and read it to people. These four songs are punk as shit, dirty, fast and seething with attitude and angst. I seriously love this record.

WILD THING – "You're a Punk" EP (Clown College)
This record ended up being a lot better than I think most people anticipated. The three tracks are definitely real rockers that surprise you with killer guitar leads and vocal sincerity. The stand out track being "You're a Punk" that starts (and restarts) with a tragically catchy guitar tone and soft dirty vocals. The trashy drums keep good time and the pace just fast enough to warrant a solo or two, the A-side delivers the goods and is what ended up securing it's spot in my year end best list. The B-side, although good, is a pop gem that just screams BLACK LIPS to me, and is reason enough to play the A-side again. The production here is what gives these good songs such great charm and should not be overlooked, good work all around.

NO TOLERANCE – "Boston Straight Edge" EP (540)
In my world (my bedroom) this was *the* mosh record of the year! I spent many-a-morning lip syncing with pointed finger in the mirror to this monster of a record! Super aggro and negative, with lyrics making a non-edger nervous to sing along. The music is Boston tuff and traditional to the point of familiarity but not lacking originality.

IRON AGE – "The Sleeping Eye" LP (Cyclopean / TeePee)
Easily the most anticipated and mercilessly repeated album of 2009 for me. This record combines the best aspects of early CRO-MAGS with the excitement and genius of the early METALLICA thrash metal records. The triumphant pace and energy of this full length is not at the expense of top notch song writing and musical ability. The production and recording are world class as each instrument is highlighted and meticulously cared for on each track. With the thickness and riff oriented song structure of INTEGRITY, IRON AGE straddle the line between metal and hardcore nicely, carving out their own space in which to operate and create. A perfect album for the fan of heavy, every track is a stand alone hit and together produce an epic release of a stature that has not been seen for a very long time. If you are even vaguely interested, pick this up.

BLANK STARE – LP (Third Party)
A seriously ridiculous fucking punk record that piles on the intensity both lyrically and musically, as they had with their past releases. This first full length proved that the interesting song development and vocal delivery would hold up outside of just a few tasty tracks via EP. Unlike their other stuff, this record got horrible distribution initially and was unfortunately the final release for these Boston rippers. Lucky for us though, it was repressed by Refuse Records and is also now available free on the bands blog, leaving you no excuse not to have a copy of these songs. Killer.

FAILURES – LP (Clean Plate)
Haters be damned! This group of hardcore vets easily turned out an album of the year with this self-titled long player. Putting most in awe with their unique take on hardcore FAILURES deliver fourteen tracks, all around the one minuet mark, of belligerent complexity and a simplistic rapid fire assault. Every track is in the red with energy and power seeping from the speakers. It is really impressive stuff, considering I can't think of any band that even comes close to pulling this kind of shit off. Really fun and exciting music, find this as well as their recently released EP.

MARKED MEN – "Ghosts" LP (Dirtnap)
I was way late on this but I thank the stars I finally caught on. The catchiest and most disturbingly addictive punk I've heard…period. The MARKED MEN are the best version of the QUEERS, a smarter version of SCREECHING WEASEL and have the transcending brilliance of the RAMONES. *Ghosts* is the first album I heard/bought after seeing their amazing live show and, possibly because of circumstance, I find it their best. Soooo good for too many reasons.

SOCIAL CIRCKLE – "City Shock" LP (No Way)
A real treat if you're looking for a straight punch in the gut! Constant rippers the whole record through, with only slight variation. This album delivers high octane, energetic punk tunes that you can't help but crank loud. SOCIAL CIRCKLE set themselves apart from the pack with a hi-tone guitar sound, deviating bass lines and aggressive drums that stand right up front, nicely complementing the articulate and balanced vocal delivery. Really rad and refreshing full length that has hints of '70s punk, '80s HC but a very contemporary sound, fuck ya.

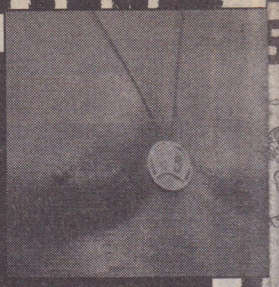
IRON LUNG – "Exposed" EP (Iron Lung)
This band does not disappoint, ever. SEX VID cover rules, the beginning riff from *Exposed* is one of my favorites, ever. And "Nothing" is signature. I almost wish they weren't this good as so something else would seem more attractive to me. Everything fresh, everything familiar, everything better than the last, it's that good.

TRAPPED UNDER ICE – "Secrets of the World" LP (Reaper)
Totally raised the bar with the "Stay Cold" EP and furthered their cause with this full length. TUI completely did away with the old and forgotten idea of "thug-core" blandness and replaced it with knuckle tuff riffs that actually surprise you with innovative development and leads that really shred. This album has the awareness and style that made ALLEGENCE so good, along with a heavy MADBALL/NYHC sound that is co-opted and transcended into a whole different beast all together. Essential.

MIND ERASER – "The Prodigal Son Brings Death" EP (Youngblood)
The latest release by these hardcore titans that perfectly epitomizes the band as a whole. Thoughtful and developed, crushing and agonizing, this record is a fucking experience! The barrage of sounds vary from heavy and punishing to quick and abrasive in enough time to keep you wondering how this it is all happening! Better than *Conscious / Unconscious*.

WEEKEND NACHOS – "Unforgivable" (Deep Six)
This was a criminally underrated album that really deserved a lot more attention than it got. The material here is no *Punish and Destroy*, nor should we expect it to be! The band seems to have focused their ridiculously thick sound toward a more give and take sludge/hardcore that not only goes unmatched in quality but fucking relentless delivery as well! The 'nach has only gotten uglier! Beware.

Layla Gibbon



I hate compiling these things. Trawling through the year in records becomes a chore, makes me feel like a data analyst. It's easier to pick ten 7"s, as always, and usually I combine the two formats into one list, but this year there were too many 7"s so I tried ten of each format. I didn't feel like writing about anything, not because I am one of those types who claims the quality of records are suddenly so much shittier this year than the mystical, mythical years before, when everything was transcendent. There were undeniably great records in 2009. Here are some words about some of them.

Ten EPs:

NEEDLES – "Desastre" EP (Lengua Armada / Bad Skulls)
I loved the 7" from last year, but this is fucking untouchable. Best Bay Area hardcore record since I have lived here… We can talk about past members of what bands played what til our mouths dry out, just put this 45 on your record player and realize!

ATENTADO – "Todo Esca Obscura" EP (Discos Enfernos / Crust As Fuck)
Shit!!! I think the records I got obsessed with this year combined possibility and destruction; this 7" contained the most eloquent combination.

KRUNCHIES – "Ugly Inside" EP (Criminal IQ)
We were assigning records, and everyone that came in wanted us to assign this to them. *So good*. I like it so much more than their previous shit. Scratch your eyeballs out to this, fuckers; like BLATZ on PCP but a garage band.

OTAN – "Sociedad Despreciable" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
This makes me want to move to Spain. I love this band so totally. Proud to be a punk existing at the same time as these miscreants.

SUPER WILD HORSES – "I Was Blind" EP (Aarght!)
FRUMPIES playing *Death Valley '69?* All girl Australian attack, that is obviously and completely right up my street.

RANK/XEROX – "Basement Furniture" EP (Mongo Bongo)
My favorite new local band—the split tape with GRASS WIDOW was so great, and it seems every time I see them play I can't believe how good they are. Like ZOUNDS if they had SACCHARINE TRUST records. They make me want to start a band, which is what punk is for/should do. Force you out of complacency.

CONDOMINIUM – "Barricades/ Big Plans" (Fashionable Idiots)
Desolation Midwestern hardcore.

SILLA ELECTRICA – All records!!
Genius brat attack punk. What I like about the TYRADES through the filter of that classic Spanish punk sound. I want this band to only ever record seven inches, and of course, to tour the U$A… I guess this is one part of a long list of 45s that are making it clear I gotta get to Spain this year.

THEE DEAD CLODETTES – "Je Cherche un Garçon" EP (Lipstick Pickup)
I hate to quote a band's MySpace, but these girls describe themselves as "Primitive female music," and I couldn't have put it better, This record seemed to disappear as soon as I was aware it existed, but it's the best kind of dirt under fingernails girls in the garage skree, reminding me somewhat of BLACK TIME and THEE HEADCOATEES.

FRANKIE ROSE – "Thee Only One/Hollow Life" (Slumberland)
Man, I could never get into the VIVIAN GIRLS, Frankie's old band. One of those things I tried to like, as shit—an all girl band that exist now, with hints of SHOP ASSISTANTS? So rad… but no! It wasn't right. But then "Thee Only One" is so dreamy, it's what I wanted VIVIAN GIRLS to be, secret messages, melancholy yet tough and assured, a total commitment to a sound and an idea… Can't wait for the full-length.

LPs:

BRILLIANT COLORS – "Introducing" LP (Slumberland)
Sometimes it's hard when one of your best friends starts a band—what if it's dreaded "friendrock?" Jess has been playing music since she was a teenager, and this record represents years of attempted bands, bedroom practice sessions—years of being the only girl in town who liked the FLAT MATES and BAD BRAINS. More importantly listening to this makes me think of skate summer, hanging out in the DMV parking lot with forties, the bad jokes and ghost stories. The songs get stuck in my head eternally. It's the perfect mix of KLEENEX and C86, but with their own sound idea…

DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Total obliteration. FUCK! Everything about this is what punk is and should always be. Creative destruction.

RATAS DEL VATICANOS – "Mocosos Pateticos" LP (Siltbreeze)
I didn't get into RATAS DEL VATICANO until I saw them play. I liked the record OK, but it just didn't hit me how great it was, until after the show. Then I instantly felt like an idiot with broken ears. Rad, shitty, blown out punk from Monterrey, Mexico. Delinquent and essential. I love this band.

UV RACE – LP (Aaarght!)
I liked the 7"s but this is a total and complete work of art of work. What you would want the kids to pay attention to. The lyrics, the music, the execution; it exemplifies the idea of band as gang, listening to it makes you want to hang out with them, but also you know, there's a sorta creepy aspect to the whole deal that's strangely appealing. The sound of bedroom terrorists, suburban oppression, city stink, living life and writing it all down for kicks, and out of necessity.

FIRMEZA 10 – "Hardcore Radikal" LP (Self-released)
Man, was any full length punker than this in 2009? The answer to that question is no. This was the punkest 12".

HOMOSTUPIDS – "The Load" LP (Load)
There's no SEX VID in this years top ten, but here's the HOMOSTUPIDS.

MIKA MIKO – "We Be Xuxa" LP (PPM)
I wasn't gonna put this. I made Cissie and Scott gasp when I was talking about that fact. Something about it is definitely lacking. It's got a few killer songs on it, but the energy level seems low compared to last two 12"s. In short, I wanted more from this MIKA MIKO's final LP, but I ended up listening to the record continuously so it made this list.

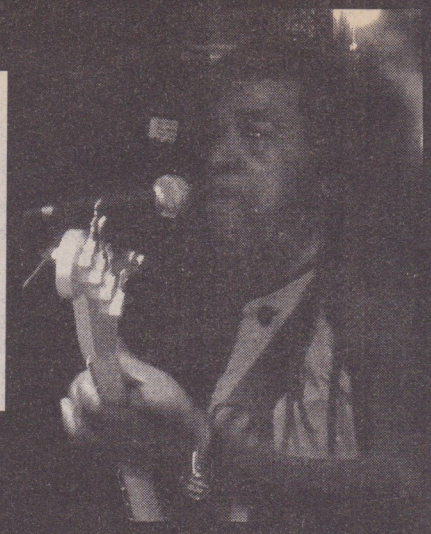
NECRO HIPPIES – LP (Raw Sugar)
Awesome dirty hardcore from New Orleans. Falling apart, stupid, perfect.

CULT RITUAL – LP (Youth Attack)
I actually did not listen to this record that much, but seeing this band play in a shitty rec room in a suburb of the Bay Area reminded why hardcore rules. Slam dancing on grimy shag carpet, cracked wood paneled walls with nails sticking out into unsuspecting youth, and a ten minute set of furious destructive, essential hardcore. We came to the show expecting nothing, and left psyched on a weird sense of possibility and the idea that hardcore is and will always be for the mutants and malcontents…

Five Tapes:
TUBERCULOSIS, TURBOSLUT, ZOMBIE DOGS, MÖRPHEME, ESSENTIAL TREMORS

Ten Reissues:
RAINCOATS – LP / HÜL – "Ingenting" LP / DEATH – "For All The World To See" / THE BRAT "The Wolf" 45 / REMO VOOR "Frogrammer/Toilet Love" / BETONG HYSTERIA – "Spontan Abort" EP / MIDDLE CLASS – "Out of Vogue" LP / RATS – LP/ MYDOLLS – "A World of Her Own" CD / FLERE DØDE PANSERE/RAZORBLADES – EP

DEATH



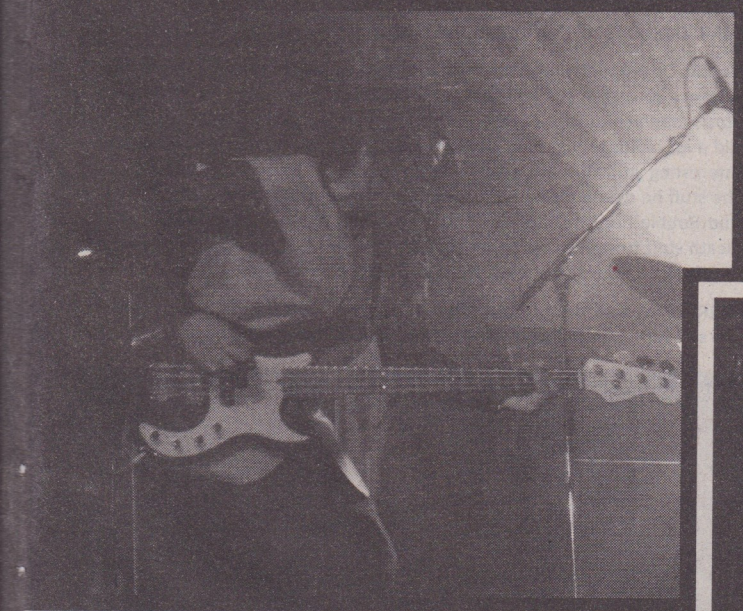
Death's story is one of those woulda, shoulda, coulda stories. After forming in Detroit in the early '70s, brothers Dannis (drums), David (guitar), and Bobby (vocals, bass) Hackney started playing around town and being praised as the next punk everything. They even scored a record deal with Capitol Records in 1975. However, when the band refused to sell out (i.e. change their band name to something more commercial), the contract was pulled. The sessions were stashed away, and the members moved on from Death, especially when David died of lung cancer in 2000. The band got the last laugh though when the lost master tapes were rediscovered and Drag City released them in February as ...For the Whole World to See, *along with being able to tour for the first time in more than 30 years, with the band Rough Francis. I was able to talk with Bobby, Dannis, and Bobbie Duncan (their touring guitarist, from Lambsbread) after their set at Fun Fun Fun Fest in Austin, Texas.*

Interview by David Glickman

Live photos by David Glickman, others by Tammy Hackney.

MRR: So set the background. How did this all start?

Bobby: This all started in 1971. We were a four piece band, and we played with our cousin who lived in Cleveland, but that got kind of old because he could only play with us during the summer. And we became a power trio, became a three-piece band and started playing rock'n'roll in 1970. Dannis went to an Alice Cooper concert, came back home and said "Hey man, we've got to play this kind of music," kind of sold me and David on it. Then David saw the Who on the *Quadrophenia* tour, and it just exploded on him. Then David was starting to become a big Pete Townshend fan and that was where a lot of his power chords and chord style was influenced, by Pete Townshend.



MRR: So for the album, what was the thought process or background? I know Detroit was an influence at the time, but was there anything else that was influencing your lives that made the songs the way they were?

Dannis: Just living in the neighborhood because, I mean we lived in a neighborhood that, you know, listened to basically black music, it was a black neighborhood. So when we came along, raising up our window, and blowing our loud rock'n'roll out the window so the whole neighborhood could hear it, it met with some adverse reaction. And when the adverse reaction comes at you, and you feel alone, I think your first reaction is to be angry about it...

Bobbie: Fight back.

Dannis: So when we got angry, we just got angry on our instruments, thus the music became harder, faster, you know. So now they call it punk rock (*band chuckles*).

MRR: So after the fallout with your label, Columbia, you moved back up to...where did you move back up to?

Dannis: Well, we originally came from Detroit, but after we went through our changes and the deal fell through, that's when a cousin of ours came to Detroit from New England and he said "Why don't you guys just come on up to New England, and chill out for a while. You know, a couple of weeks, get your heads together, see what you want to do, see what direction you want to go into." So we did that, and we came to New England, Vermont specifically, and we fell so in love with the place because it was musically

alive, it was a college town.

Bobby: Like Haight-Ashbury.

Dannis: Yeah, it had that Haight-Ashbury kind of feel to it, and we fell in love with it, so we're still on vacation up in Vermont.

MRR: So after 34 years, too long, *...For the Whole World to See* was finally released on Drag City. How did that deal come through and how did the rediscovery occur?

Bobby: Well, you know it's weird because my son had taken a year off of college and decided to travel around the country. He ended up in San Francisco, and he had been living there for a couple of months. We had always been in touch with each other. One day he calls me up and says, "Dad, do you realize they they're playing your music down here at underground parties, and people are going crazy over it?" And I say, "You mean my Lambsbread music [the reggae band Bobby and Dannis formed]?" He said, "No, Dad, you were in a band in the '70s, in Detroit." And then the phone got really quiet. And then he said, "And you put out a single called 'Politicians in My Eyes' and 'Keep on Knocking?'" And then I said, "Oh my goodness, that's us!" And then he said after one of those moments, "Dad, why didn't you tell me?!" We had never really sat him down and said hey let's listen to all these old tapes. At a passing glance we would say to them, "Hey, we were in a rock'n'roll band in Detroit in the '70s" and they'd go, "Yeah, Dad." And so them even discovering the music kind of brings it even more full circle, because they, our kids, first of all before the world knew about this music, they were our biggest fans. They, upon discovering this music, became our biggest fans.

MRR: And with Drag City how did they release it? It was just push, you sent it to them and said would you like to release this?

Bobby: No, what happened was, actually my oldest son Bobby, who had been in punk music and hardcore music for a while, he knew a lot about

record labels, and which ones were the good ones and which ones were the so-so ones and which ones were the movers and the shakers. And he told me, "Dad, this record got to be put out." He says, "I know of a label that's the crème de le crème of the punk music scene and are putting out reissued music from the past. It's called Drag City and if you want, I can put you in touch with the guy." He put us in touch with Dan, the president of Drag City records and the rest is history.

MRR: Is it a surreal experience because you never expected these to see the light of day, did you? And now the album is critically acclaimed and you're touring. This must be an experience.

(*The whole band starts laughing*)

Bobby: This is crazy! You just summed it up man! You just summed up the way we feel! This is crazy! But it's so good, and it's so much fun and we are having such a great time. It's come at a time in our lives when we, like I said,

we kind of resolved to kind of laying back, and playing music, and seeing what direction we were going in and this has been a real wonderful thing, it's a wonderful ride. And what an awesome opportunity to be here at Fun Fun Fun Fest.

MRR: Well, thank you for coming. I know there are seven tracks on the album, but if I'm correct there were supposed to be twelve tracks.

Bobby: That is exactly true.

MRR: Do you think those other five songs will see the light of day?

Bobby: Oh yes, definitely. As a matter of fact, we were going to perform one of those songs if they had given us an encore. (*My jaw drops and the band starts laughing again.*) But we have a lot more Death music. Me and David did a lot of songs together, we have an extensive catalog, we have a lot of interesting stuff to share. David's music is going to be coming out, some of the stuff he did on his own, some of the stuff we did as Death. Me, Dannis, and Bobbie here, we are going to be putting together some elements of Death stuff from the catalog, so that we have a lot of different variations of Death music coming out over the next couple of years.

MRR: Yeah! Now despite the songs being over 30 years old, a lot of them are still very, especially lyrically, prominent to what is going on today. What

do you think that says and does that scare you a little or bother you?

Bobby: You know it's a good thing for us musically, but unfortunately it shows how far we have come and how far we have not come. The fact that the same issues we sung about in 1975, people are still dealing with today, says a lot about the progress and maybe the regress of America.

Dannis: It also says a lot about the thought process when the music was being written and it shows clearly that these lyrics, and possibly this music, was well ahead of its time. And I'm not just saying that to pat ourselves on the back, but I'm saying that because David predicted it and now the world

and we are seeing it to be true.

Bobbie: And if I may interject, good songs, with truthful and realistic stories transcend time, you understand? You could write something, and if it's relevant to one time period it's always going to be relevant and if you have some foresight, it will just carry itself through time. I believe these songs are going to wind up being standards.

Bobby: And I'll tell you, what we were singing about is like what the country is dealing with now. We were dealing with the Vietnam War, you're dealing with the Iraq war and Afghanistan. We were dealing with social injustice, people today are dealing with social injustice. We were talking about saving the environment, and what we saw was coming and what the world was going through now. So your generation and our generation have dealt with the same issues.

Bobbie: It shows that timing, other words, life is cyclical; it goes around. Same thing happens, folks come back with another saying, but it's really the same thing people were saying thirty years ago, you just phrase it a different way. You know it's a war then, it's a war now. The same issues that were relevant then are relevant now. And 'death' is always a relevant issue.

MRR: Was there ever a point, after you fell in love with Vermont, when you were looking at the punk scene, especially in the early to mid '80s when the whole hardcore scene was really building up, and saying, "You know maybe we can start Death again. Maybe the time is right."

Bobby: You know what, there were times when I heard music and I said, "Wow, that reminds me of some of the stuff we use to do back in Detroit." I don't know, because the fact of the matter is that during that time in the '80s we had just recorded more music with David, our brother, and we had changed the name of the band to 4th Movement. We had kind of moved on, so we weren't really...I mean, we were listening to the scene, and we looked at it almost like we were just passing on the baton. Like they had the younger generation and they were doing the rock'n'roll, maybe we'll do the reggae or the rhythm and blues or whatever. I don't know, it wasn't a thing we looked at. We had just basically moved on and we went into something that was kind of new. But at the same time Dannis and I always fought. We knew in our heart that we loved what we did in Detroit, we always cherished that.

Dannis: It was just too heartbreaking to listen to.

Bobby: Right, exactly.

Dannis: It brought you back to our practice room, it brought you back to our garage, it brought you back to memories of David. That's why we didn't listen to it.

Bobby: That's a lot of reasons to it.

MRR: I know you've been musically active since Death, but were you at all worried about the tour and playing those old songs, and—sorry to bring this up—replacing David on the tour?

Bobby: It was very emotional, but you know we filled David's hole with Bobbie. It's almost like a feeling of...we felt that feeling of loss for David a couple of years after he died. Now it's almost like we got him back. We talk about it now almost like he's walking with us, so it's a whole different perspective for us. So it's not a sad thing, it's a wonderful thing.

MRR: Now there's a documentary about you guys called *Where Do We Go From Here???* What can you say about it and is it true that Mos Def is directing it, or is that another movie?

Bobby: No, that's another movie. It's by a man named Jeff Howlett and Howlermano Productions. There has been some interest from Mos Def and his crew about doing a documentary and maybe even a film, but that's still being discussed. But the documentary that Howlermano Productions is putting out is going to be first rate and we can't wait for that. It's going to be great.

Death's album ...For the Whole World to See *was released in 2009 on Drag City. The documentary* Where Do We Go From Here??? *has a yet to be announced release date in 2010, and the band Rough Francis, formed by the band members' sons, also have a planned album due out on Drag City in 2010.*

KIM PHUC

The first time I saw Kim Phuc was in a smoky, dark, and dingy bar in Pittsburgh. To put it bluntly, they leveled the place. I had never seen a band perform with such intensity, spite, and volume. They will remain, to this day, one of the loudest bands I have ever seen. Suffice to say, I knew while setting up after them, that they had just stolen the show. Immediately I jumped at the chance to interview their guitarist, Ben Smartnick, to see what this band was all about.
Interview by Jake Churton

MRR: I was unable to find any information about the band. Can you please state everyone's name and what they do in the band?
Ben: I'd rather not.

MRR: Are you trying to create some sort of mystique by remaining anonymous?
Ben: No, it just seems like something you could find out if you looked at the records or website.

MRR: You don't list anyone's name on the records or website.
Ben: Oh, right. If it means that much to the interview, I'm Ben, I play guitar, Eli plays the other guitar, Corey plays bass, TFP plays drums, and Rob sings.

MRR: Were any of you in previous bands? I've seen that you are a side project of Brain Handle and Caustic Christ?
Ben: I played bass in Brain Handle for their first year and Corey was in Caustic Christ before he joined the band. This was never a "side project" and was always our main interest. The next person that dubs us as such will get punched in the fucking throat. Eli was previously in a band called Mary Celeste, Rob sang for a band in the late '80s called Direct Action, and TFP played in the mighty Ice Capades and now is guitar guy for Baby Bird. It took a couple years to solidify a line up.

MRR: How did the band Kim Phuc get its start?
Ben: The band Kim Phuc got its start fighting in small boxing clubs throughout NYC, getting rejected by 200 boxing coaches until Doc Louis decided to take us under his wing and lead us to the top of the boxing circuit. We got our first break after a first round TKO against a guy named Glass Joe and we haven't looked back since.

MRR: You just described the career of Little Mac from Punch Out.
Ben: So what if I did?

MRR: I'm trying to conduct an interview with you for the benefit of your band.
Ben: Sorry, just say it's a metaphor for something about anarchy. This is going in *MRR*?

MRR: Yes.
Ben: Excellent.

MRR: Does the name choice have anything to do with the political nature of the band?
Ben: I don't see how a guy yelling about his problems over loud music has anything to do with politics. I'm going to answer "no."

MRR: You've said in other interviews that the Germs were a big influence on you. What other bands are you influenced by?
Ben: Do you mean which bands are we trying to sound and act like?

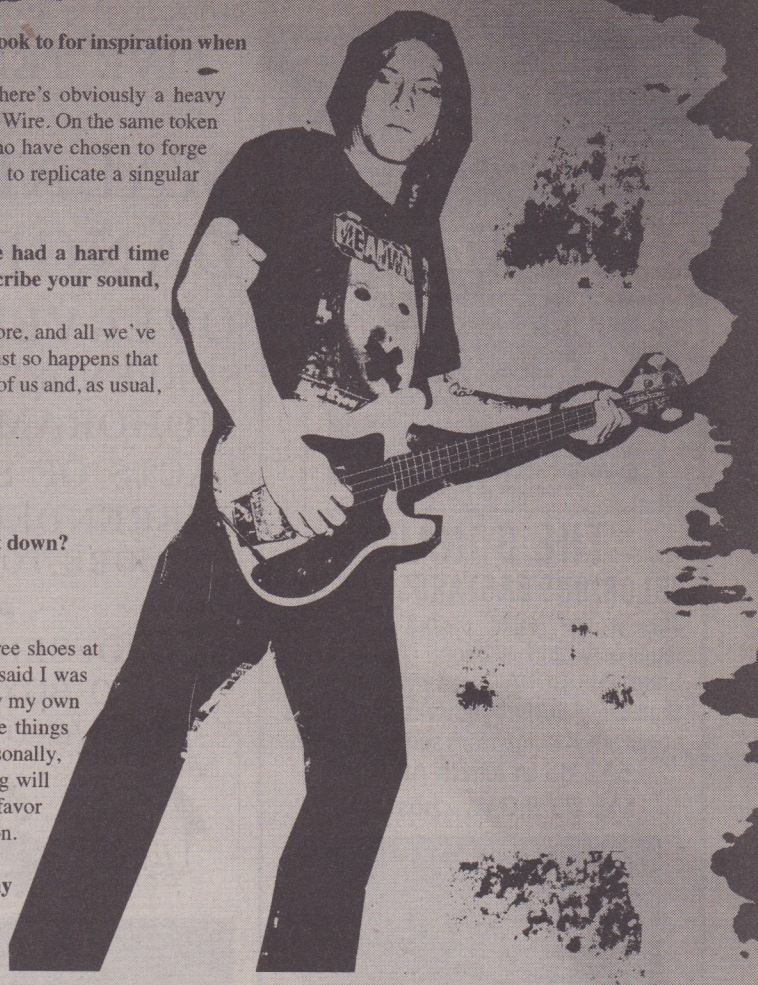
MRR: Well, I meant more along the lines of which bands do you look to for inspiration when writing music.
Ben: I feel like we wear our musical influences on our sleeve. There's obviously a heavy Stooges vibe to what we do, as well as Joy Division, Black Flag, and Wire. On the same token though, I feel more in line with a band like Converge or Cursed who have chosen to forge their own paths and defy genres than some trivial band that sets out to replicate a singular influence to appeal to a predetermined audience.

MRR: What genre do you think Kim Phuc fits into then? I've had a hard time coming up with anything other than "punk" when trying to describe your sound, although that label is fairly broad and nonspecific.
Ben: If anything, we are a hardcore band. We all grew up in hardcore, and all we've done is take some influences and play them as loud as possible. It just so happens that people who did not come up in the hardcore scene have taken notice of us and, as usual, the audience dictates perception more than the music.

MRR: Would you say you are unhappy with your audience?
Ben: Completely let down would be a better way to describe it.

MRR: What were your expectations to allow yourself to be so let down?
Ben: Free shoes, jeans, and pizza. And moshing.

MRR: You want people to give you things for free?
Ben: Yes, but specifically shoes, jeans, and pizza. We were given free shoes at South by Southwest and I lied to the people in the Levis truck and said I was in Dillinger 4 so they would give me a pair of jeans, but I had to buy my own pizza that day. So yeah, completely let down. Not until these three things happen on the same day will we feel appreciated for what we do. Personally, I would prefer if they came unsolicited , but I'm sure this leftist rag will spin my sentiments into me eschewing community participation in favor of wealth collecting or demanding subservience from a lower echelon.



MRR: To date you have two 7"s and a split 7" out. Are there any plans to release a full length?
Ben: Actually we have three 7"s out. The newest 7" is on Dear Skull Records and came out in August. We are planning to record the full length in September.

MRR: Do you have any idea when that will be released?
Ben: I hope by November, but who knows.

MRR: Is a label releasing it?
Ben: We've talked to a few, but can't decide on which person we feel completely confident in lying to us and being ripped off by. You know, it's hard, you want to find the best person for the job, the guy that can lie the most to you, feed you the best bullshit, and keep the most money for themselves, but sometimes that person isn't so prevalent. People seem to think it's a bad quality. I don't get it. We want the best for ourselves. I typed "best rip off record label person" in Google yesterday as a Hail Mary, and all it provided were pictures of David Geffen and shit. Not quite the person I was hoping for. That said, I feel like the best person for the job lives somewhere in Los Angeles, but we have never played there, so we might have to settle for second or third best.

MRR: Do you have plans to do full scale touring once the LP is released?
Ben: We've been hesitant to schedule long tours in favor of weekend trips since Pittsburgh is located in such a great spot for doing stuff like that. I'm sure a West Coast tour will happen at some point, but not until we have an LP to tour on.

MRR: Any closing comments?
Ben: I have never had a boomerang return to me.

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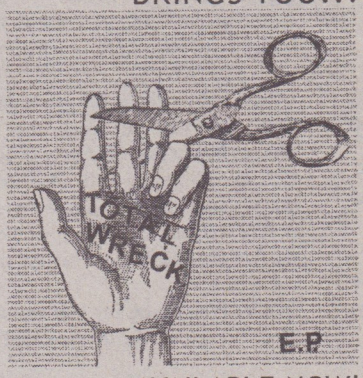

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DREW WARDLAW OF DRY-ROT

This interview came about because of a letter Dry-Rot vocalist Drew Wardlaw sent to Maximum Rocknroll (printed in issue #318). The band has been the subject of some degree of controversy due to the fact that the members are Christian. I suspect that the majority of their critics have made little effort to find out what Dry-Rot is about—and the same can probably be said for a good deal of the band's defenders as well. To this end, I was mainly interested in asking Drew what his views are on a couple specific social issues. I did not know where he stood, and the purpose of this interview was to find out. It should not be seen as either an endorsement of (nor an attack on) Dry-Rot or Christianity in the punk scene. Read it for yourself and develop your own conclusions about these matters.

This interview took place in November 2009 between Chris Hubbard (MRR) and Drew Wardlaw (Dry-Rot). It is crucial to note that Drew's answers reflect his own personal views, and not necessarily those of anyone else in the band.

Photos by Fred Hammer and Jason Penner.

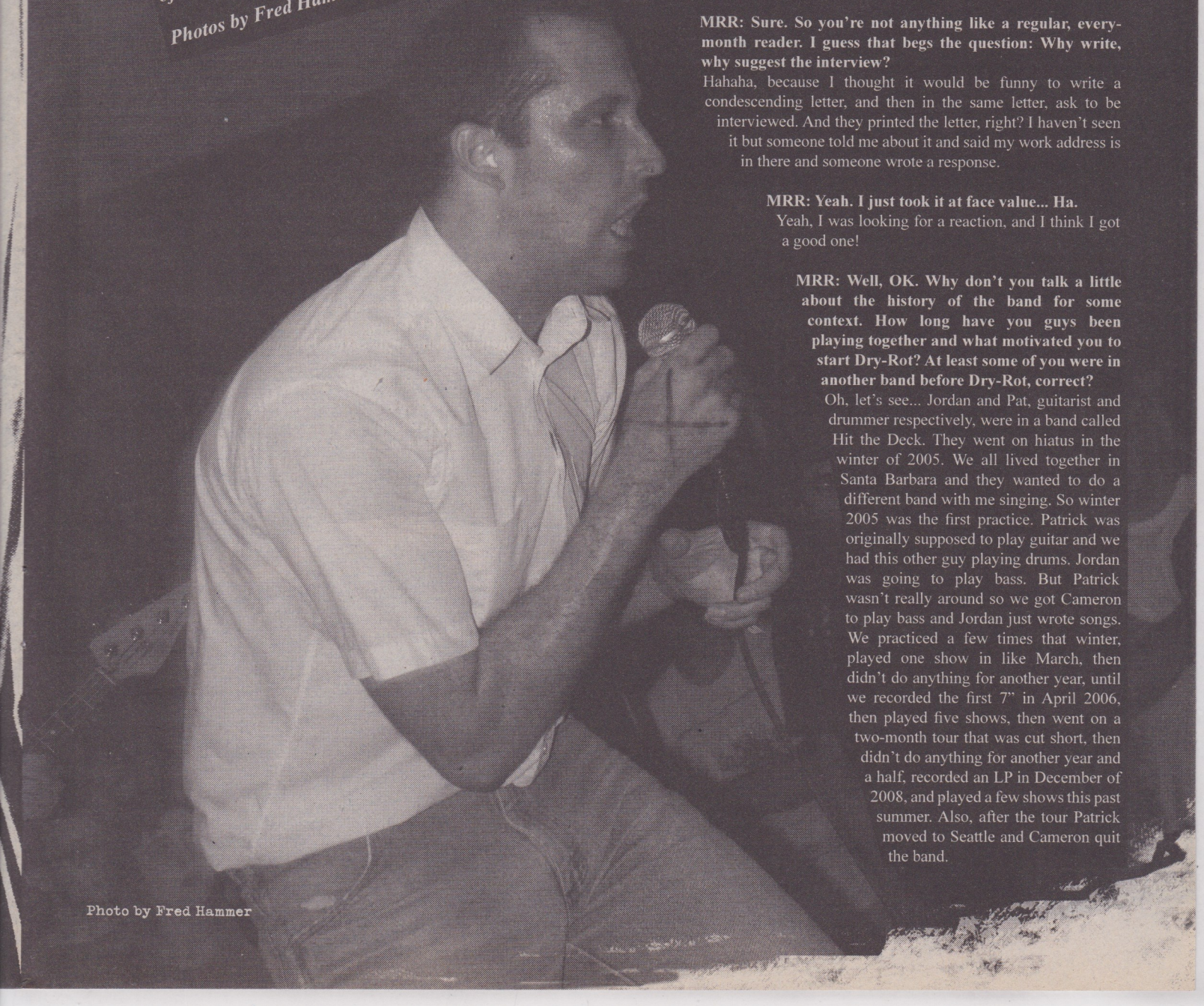


Photo by Fred Hammer

MRR: In reference to the letter you sent to *MRR*, is it completely true that you don't read the magazine?

I've read a couple band interviews or record reviews, and because of that I've glanced through the rest of it, but I've never sat down with the intention of reading a whole issue.

MRR: Sure. So you're not anything like a regular, every-month reader. I guess that begs the question: Why write, why suggest the interview?

Hahaha, because I thought it would be funny to write a condescending letter, and then in the same letter, ask to be interviewed. And they printed the letter, right? I haven't seen it but someone told me about it and said my work address is in there and someone wrote a response.

MRR: Yeah. I just took it at face value... Ha.

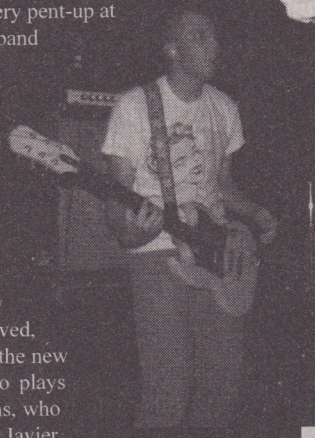
Yeah, I was looking for a reaction, and I think I got a good one!

MRR: Well, OK. Why don't you talk a little about the history of the band for some context. How long have you guys been playing together and what motivated you to start Dry-Rot? At least some of you were in another band before Dry-Rot, correct?

Oh, let's see... Jordan and Pat, guitarist and drummer respectively, were in a band called Hit the Deck. They went on hiatus in the winter of 2005. We all lived together in Santa Barbara and they wanted to do a different band with me singing. So winter 2005 was the first practice. Patrick was originally supposed to play guitar and we had this other guy playing drums. Jordan was going to play bass. But Patrick wasn't really around so we got Cameron to play bass and Jordan just wrote songs. We practiced a few times that winter, played one show in like March, then didn't do anything for another year, until we recorded the first 7" in April 2006, then played five shows, then went on a two-month tour that was cut short, then didn't do anything for another year and a half, recorded an LP in December of 2008, and played a few shows this past summer. Also, after the tour Patrick moved to Seattle and Cameron quit the band.

MRR: I was also interested to know if you had a particular idea in mind for the band when you got together. Also: I did notice the line-up was different on the most recent 7". Who are the two new people?

I know Jordan and Patrick wanted to do a fast hardcore band. Hit the Deck was more of a youth-crew type band, and they wanted to do something a little different. As for me, I just wanted to sing in a real band. I'm not a very artistic person, or particularly creative for that matter, and I was feeling very pent-up at that time. I thought singing in a band would be a good outlet for bad feelings. One big thing that we all decided on at the beginning was that we didn't want to have any kind of political agenda with this band. We wanted it to be a purely personal experience for all the band members. Like, we wanted to be sure only personal emotions were involved, with no outside influences. So the new band members are Adam, who plays bass, and Tony Cicero on drums, who played for Saccharine Trust. Javier has been playing drums live though, because Tony's schedule is pretty hectic.



MRR: OK. I'm guessing Tony is the most recent Saccharine Trust drummer, right? Or is he someone that played with them in the '80s when they were on SST?

He joined right after *Pagan Icons* was recorded, so he played on *Surviving You Always* and *We Became Snakes* and all that weird stuff. He toured with them on the *Pagan Icons* record I guess, like with Black Flag and stuff. He has wild stories about Henry Rollins being mean and stuff.

MRR: Woah.

Yeah, it's wild. He refers to them as "Henry" and "Greg."

MRR: How did you hook up with him?

He works with this guy Miles who engineered our LP, and Jordan was hanging around the studio a couple years ago and met the guy. Then we were trying to figure out whom we could get to play drums with us, and Miles just said, "You should just have Tony do it," and that was that.

MRR: Ah. Anyway, would you say that the "personal emotions" focus is still the motivation for the band? Or has it evolved in any particular direction?

No, it has definitely remained a constant throughout. Like I said, it's my only outlet. I can't draw or paint or anything else creative, so this is it. Each record has corresponded with particularly horrible times in my life, albeit different circumstances, and the lyrics reflect that. They have to; I couldn't write about anything else if I wanted to. When I write lyrics, it's because things are bad and that's what is weighing on my mind.

MRR: Yeah, having a band as an outlet can be a good thing... OK, we can get back to some of that band stuff, but I want to talk a bit about religion. It's been written about in the magazine a bit; Dry-Rot has received attention because of the members' religious views. How do you feel about that?

Sure, I remember Rich Warwick from Parts Unknown sent me an email with a letter he wrote *Maximum Rocknroll* scolding them about talking about us. I don't know exactly what someone said, but I think there was something in a record review or something. Here's the thing—if we put on a record "Christ is Lord" or something, we are expecting people to talk about us, and we are expecting it to be in a negative way. We are Christians in a predominately Atheist, or at least Agnostic, music scene. That doesn't bother me. What bothers me is that I have read a good amount of things about us being religious or whatever, and every thing said about us has been extremely superficial and ignorant. People need to remember that I've been studying Christianity and reading the Bible for 20-plus years. I'm by no means any kind of scholar, but I know about my own religion, so if someone is going to say something negative, it at least needs to be accurate. It's also funny because the only reason people know we are religious is because we tell them. If we hadn't mentioned anything on our lyric sheets, there would be no discussion about it. I love that people have liked our band and ordered a record, and then they get it and will then not like us.

MRR: Speaking as someone who comes from a completely atheistic background, I'm curious how you are Christian—would you say it was more from your upbringing or something that you discovered at some point in your life?

Well, my parents are Christian and took me to church when I was little, but as soon as I started developing my sense of self, I guess around junior high, they stopped making me go to church with them and let me decide on my own. I went through high school, and then graduated and moved away. At that point I started to really look into what I believed in and what I didn't. You know, I was just living on my own and starting my first year of college, so that's kind of when you really start that second

Photos by Jason Penner

stage of self-discovery, you know what I mean? That time in my life was really hard and I went through bad things, like everyone does, and that is when I really established what I believe in. Having a belief in God helped me feel better through that time, and if I hadn't believed in something then I think I would be much worse off then I am now. People can say it's a crutch or that I'm weak or something, but that's OK. I believe that God looks after me and it makes me feel better.

MRR: You said the band to some degree expects a reaction for being Christian. But besides a little note here and there on the back of the records, would you say there's much of an overt religious "influence" on the band?
I don't think there is any direct Christian influence in the band, other than the members of the band being Christian. It isn't the point of the band to be religious, we just put the stuff on the record sleeves just like any other thank you.

MRR: OK. How much of a connection do you feel with the conservative Christian movement in this country? Like, specifically abortion and homosexuality issues?
I don't think I feel any connection to conservative Christianity. I tried to send a 7" for Focus on the Family to review, but they wouldn't take it. I wanted them to review it and be upset by it, but that didn't pan out. Anyway, the Moral Majority folks don't represent the majority of Christians. Do you remember several years ago when there was a *20/20* report on Straight Edge? They went to Salt Lake City and interviewed those hardline guys? And I think there was a murder or something? Anyway, that's not what Straight Edge people are like, that's only a small fraction of them, but that's what everyone sees. It's the same with Christianity, or Islam, or any other group. People don't see normal Christians on TV, because that's boring and isn't entertaining. They only see the people bombing abortion clinics or Pat Robertson saying feminists and homosexuals caused 9/11.

As far as homosexuality goes, if anyone bothered to actually study the Bible, and I'm talking about Christians here, they would know that nowhere in the Bible does it actually say that homosexuality is wrong. There are two main passages that talk about homosexuality: the Sodom and Gomorrah story and a passage in the book of Romans. In both stories, the people of the city were just having sex with anyone, men or women, and that's what's wrong. It's not that a man is having sex with man or a woman is having sex with a woman, it's like people are just having sex with anything around them. Those stories are used to illustrate the point that if you aren't in control of yourself, it can destroy you. And of course Christians take that and say that homosexuality is wrong because God killed all the homosexuals. It's the same thing as Hitler interpreting Friedrich Nietzsche as justifying genocide.

As far as abortion goes, I don't like abortion, but I don't agree with the Pro-Life movement. Their whole thing is that they want to make abortion illegal, which, let's be honest, is never going to happen. I don't want abortion to be illegal. I think that would be very dangerous and I agree with people that say there would be these back alley coat-hanger jobs. It certainly wouldn't be as widespread as people make it out to be, because I think the illegality of abortion would deter people from getting them. However, there would still be abortions, even if they were just in illegal clinics and not Uncle Ronald in the corner with a Hoover. If the Pro-Life people don't like abortion, they should be getting behind causes like emergency contraception and making that available for teenagers without a prescription and things like that. I think both sides of the fence can agree that no one wants to go get an abortion, but some women feel it's necessary to. If they were able to get emergency contraception more easily, abortion wouldn't even be an issue. Or taking it a step further, if regular contraception was being used, they wouldn't even need the morning-after pill. This is where people's money and energy needs to go, because the Pro-Life movement is useless as it is now.

I've actually been thinking about the abortion issue a lot lately. I just read a paper that shows decent evidence that the crack epidemic of the '80s essentially ended because of Roe v. Wade. See, because of Roe v. Wade in 1972, inner-city mothers were able to take care of their unwanted pregnancies, and there wasn't a generation of inner-city teenagers who grew up in a household that was unprepared for children. So I got to thinking about that. There is more evidence that supports that claim, but I've only read that one paper all the way through. That makes a lot of sense. And the evidence suggests that if it hadn't been for abortion, the crack epidemic could theoretically still be going on today. However, I think while that is a solution, I think it takes social responsibility away from the larger community. By that I mean that an inner-city woman gets an abortion because she isn't prepared to be a mother. Maybe she doesn't have a job or is still in school or whatever. If that child grows up to be a crack addict, it means that either one or both of the child's parents were addicts themselves or they had other issues that prevented them from being a good parent. And I'm speaking in general terms here, because obviously each situation is different. But this woman who decides not to keep her child is doing so because if she had it, she wouldn't be able to provide for it in all the ways she needs. The responsibility of the city then, or the state, or the country, is then to not allow women to be in those circumstances. [With abortion legal] the child isn't born and so there isn't another generation who will potentially use or sell drugs, but there is still a woman who is not in a stable enough position who remains in that position for the rest of her life, as the statistics on inner-city women show. And again, these are very broad generalizations I'm making, and certainly poor inner-city women aren't the only ones who get abortions, although a disproportionately large amount do, but that fits with the research of why the crack epidemic ended.

Photo by Jason Penner

MRR: Hmm. Well, it's good to note that you're making broad generalizations....
I'm only speaking in terms of the evidence that shows Roe v. Wade ended the crack epidemic.

MRR: Yeah, it's an interesting idea... With research like this, you also want to read the researchers' evidence closely. It's easy to start with a theory and find evidence to support it...
Right, like I said, I've read other research, but this was the only paper I read from start to finish. Obviously there are criticisms of a statement like that, and I don't know if I fully believe it, but it's interesting.

MRR: Right, I'm speaking in general with all sorts of research that say one thing caused another.
I know, it's easy to find statistics to support any claim you come make. And it's just as easy to find contradictory research. What do you think about this [theory]? This is what some people have written journal articles about and that's all the information I have to go on. Do you think that could be the case or does it sound pretty far-fetched?

Photo by Jason Penner

MRR: Well, as for the theory, as you described it, it doesn't sound far-fetched. The way you're talking about it though—it might come off strange in print. By that, I mean it's easy to reduce a particular group of people to a statistic and then make assumptions off that. Does that make sense? For people reading this interview, it might look like you're getting all your information about "inner-city crack addicts" from studies, and that you're comfortable making assumptions as though you know all there is to know about "the plight of inner-city people" or something. But as for the research—the decline of the crack epidemic (and it's worth noting crack hasn't disappeared) could definitely be related to abortion legalization; it could also be due to some unknown factor as well, and simply coincide with Roe v. Wade. There's no way to *prove* it. I suppose I'd have to check out the article to have a more informed opinion.

I hope I made it clear enough that I didn't take this one paper I read fully as the final word on the subject. That wasn't my intention certainly. I was using that as a hypothetical to use in a moral question. But you bring up a few interesting points. I'm never going to understand what it is like to be a minority in America, nor is any white person. Especially an educated researcher doing a study on a minority group. So really the best information we, as outsiders, or me, as someone who watched *New Jack City* recently and was interested in the crack epidemic, have are academic papers. However, and this is something I didn't think about until you brought it up: is this patronizing to be sitting reading an online journal database about a theory someone wrote about the effects of abortion in the inner city? And with that, should people be more tactful about what they choose to study?

MRR: Well, I think someone could say it's patronizing, but personally I don't think it's *wrong*... I mean, we're talking about major social problems—huge, complicated things. It's basically impossible for someone like yourself to approach this without looking like some privileged person in academia interested in "saving" poor, underprivileged people. It's good to be aware of that, but I don't think it means people shouldn't engage with these issues. It's good you're interested and concerned about stuff like that. And educating one's self is the first step.

I never thought about it being patronizing, but I think you're right that it could come off that way...

MRR: And of course it's also worth noting that crack isn't confined to any particular group, "minority" or otherwise... Anyway, you made the point that the Moral Majority people don't represent the majority of Christians. Would you consider yourself among "the majority of Christians"? And along the same lines: granted, abortion clinic bombers and people like Pat Robertson are wingnuts, but what about more mainstream Christian groups that are able to affect changes on our society at large—stuff that other people would consider oppressive. For example, Christian groups were recently able to organize a massive movement to introduce legislation to outlaw same-sex marriage in California. How does that make you feel about your Christianity?

You know, that is actually a very good point. I mean, it was more or less Christians who got George W. Bush into office, so I guess the majority of Christians are among the "Moral Majority." Maybe I should have said that the Christians I know aren't like that. I was listening to NPR after the election last year, and they were saying that 70% of voting African Americans voted in favor of Proposition 8. And that more African Americans voted in this election because Barack Obama was running for president, so it was the African American vote that decided the Proposition 8 outcome. That being said, I think I heard a similar statistic on like John and Ken, a more-conservative-than-not local talk show. So in the end, I'm sure it was Christians that decided the outcome. I mean, let's be honest, everyone saw the Prop 8 rallies where people were praying for God to "bless Prop 8."

The thing is, if a person reads the Bible accurately, they will see that none of that is in the book itself. Like I said, there is nothing in the Bible that mentions homosexuality being wrong except in the context of people not being able to control their sexual urges. The Bible is a book that teaches compassion for others, that is what Jesus taught. Another example is that there is a passage in the Bible that talks about women being subservient to men, and that they are not allowed to be leaders of the church. A lot of Christians take this passage literally, meaning that the man must be the head of the household, and that a woman cannot be the pastor of a church. However, if you talk to any Biblical scholar, they will tell you that those passages are contextual and only applicable to the time period. Unfortunately, you don't have to be a scholar or even intelligent to be a Christian, and that is where these ideas come from. That is why religion in general, and Christianity specifically, can be such a dangerous tool. It is such a beautiful and pure thing in its intended form, but the people who get a hold of it can turn it against itself and create an oppressive system. Like I said, I can't even begin to defend what a lot of Christians do, the only thing I can do is live my life according to what I believe Jesus stood for and taught and hope that I can make things better around me.

I don't know, what do you think of religion? You said before you were atheistic, but do you think there can be legitimate believers in something or do you see organized religion as an intrinsic crutch?

MRR: Well, first of all, I don't have that much experience with religion in my life, so to a slight degree I'm uneasy with it, if that makes sense.

That definitely makes sense.

MRR: Perhaps agnostic would be a more accurate description of my beliefs? I think if there's some sort of supreme being or consciousness, it's something that we as humans couldn't understand. I really have no problem with spirituality. As for organized religion, I think it's like any other organization—it has its pros and cons. Take punk as a somewhat similar organization—in my life, it's been a very positive thing (well, for the most part). But people can use punk as an excuse for shitty behavior. In general, if people are dogmatic, it can be dangerous. Organized religion sometimes scares me because I can't really argue with someone like a Pat Robertson type, or any sort of religious fanatic...

Yeah, I think you said it well, that organizations have pros and cons. I think it's largely the individual that decides what to do within the organization.

MRR: Why don't you talk a little about how you specifically got into punk, and maybe what it means to you, since, as you mentioned, Christianity is quite broad and means different things to different people... So does punk. What does it mean to you? Do you identify as punk?

I come from a very small town in between Los Angeles and San Francisco, called Atascadero.

There wasn't a music scene of any kind there, so the only way I knew about punk music was through a friend's older brother. When I was in 7th grade, I listened to Corrosion of Conformity—not the punk stuff, but like *Wiseblood*—and Gwar, and stuff like that. I was talking to my friend and he said his brother listened to all these bands that played really fast. I wanted him to make me a tape, so the brother gave me tapes of Propagandhi, FYP, Youth of Today, and Persevere (which was Carry On before they changed their name). That's how I got into punk. The music was way faster and meaner than Gwar, and that was great to me. It was still hard though because while there were a few hardcore types at school, we were so isolated from everything. I didn't go to my first real hardcore show until I was a sophomore in high school, and my mom drove me three hours to Ojai to see Count Me Out and Good Clean Fun. This was also right as the internet was becoming important, and my family was behind, so I was still more or less scrounging for bands to listen to. I would just try to buy anything that looked fast and was in the punk section at the record store. So if I can backtrack slightly, in junior high is when everyone starts to develop a sense of independence and start to like girls and things like that, and it's a hard time for a lot of people. Of course I got made fun of because I was really skinny and couldn't do pull-ups, and the guys making fun of me were these real jerks, you know, real rotten guys. But I saw that all these people liked them and they had girlfriends and all this stuff, and it made me so mad. I decided I didn't need that popularity if I had to be a jerk to get it. And I guess from that point on I started identifying myself as punk. I would wear stupid clothes and listen to stupid angry music because that's what those other people didn't do. I think continues to be the case. I don't dress crazily any more but the principle is the same. But I think now I like being in opposition to people more, regardless of who they are. Like, I have a tendency to just want to make people feel uncomfortable or argue with people, regardless of what or who they are. I'm trying not to do that as much though. I'm really trying to be nice to everyone. It's working too, I think, I've noticed I'm getting into less confrontational situations lately.

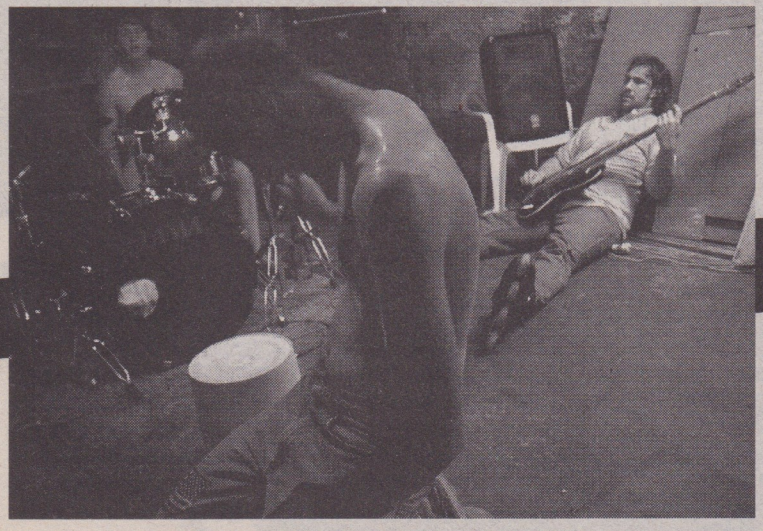
MRR: So, you left Atascadero to go to college? Is that where you met the other Dry-Rot folks? And you're at some sort of university now, is that right?
I graduated high school in 2003, and moved to Santa Barbara. I bummed around at junior colleges for three years and then went to Westmont College, also in Santa Barbara. I graduated I guess in 2008? Or 2007? No, 2008 with a bachelor's degree in sociology with an emphasis in deviant behavior. I work at UCSB now, at the theoretical physics institute. That's where I mailed that letter from. I met the Dry-Rot guys when they were in Hit the Deck; they played up in my area my senior year of high school, with a band I sang in at the time, and kept in touch until I moved down there.

MRR: Let's hear the name of your high school band...
Oh, I thought I said it, haha, I guess not. It was called Blood Dumpster.

MRR: I'm curious if you've experienced any sort of personal conflicts being "Christian" and "punk"? Like, any difficulties reconciling the two.
Yeah, big time. Here's the thing, Some punk people don't like me because I'm Christian, and some Christian people don't like me because I'm punk. It's a win-win. It's not as bad anymore with the Christians, but when I was in high school, none of the pastors liked me because I dressed weird. But I loved all that stuff. Like, on church trips and summer camp, I would bring the nastiest music I had and play it for like my camp counselor and the other guys in my cabin, and they would get all freaked out like I was some heretic or something, but I wouldn't ever do anything actually bad, like I would never give them anything to hold on to. I never said bad words or got in trouble or anything, I just looked weird and smelled bad and listened to awful music. But everyone in Ventura is so modern and unassuming. It sucks. There are not enough rednecks here.

MRR: I get the sense that you are OK with making people uncomfortable—people that might share the same views as you. On the other side of that, are there any current punk bands/zines/people/etc. that you collaborate with? Like bands you support or play shows with or are inspired by?
Yeah, I like making people uncomfortable. It's cheap but I think it's really funny. I think my attention span is really going to the dogs, so I'm constantly trying to entertain myself. Making people feel weird is a really easy way to make myself laugh. Like I said, it's lame, but I really get a laugh out of it. Anyway, Mike Priehs and Deer Healer Records, and Roderick McClain. I think those are like-minded folks and I love doing stuff with them. I don't think there are a lot of people with the same mindset as me and Jordan and the rest of Dry-Rot, but Rod and Mike definitely share that. Their band Threatener has inspired me certainly more than any other band of the 21st century. Dry-Rot has done a record with Deer Healer and we are working two other things with him right now. One of them Rod is involved in. Mike and his wife Abby also collaborated on a song on the LP. I really like them a lot. Have you heard Mike's band Herds? They are awesome. Their LP is tops. Best record. It's really different. Like, the structure is very basic, but the songwriting and lyrics and presentation of the whole thing are completely unique.

MRR: The Painkiller EP—I heard it was a "concept record" of sorts... is that true? Who's Drew Darby and where are the samples on the record from?



Photos by Jason Penner

Yeah, the Painkiller one, *Subordinate*, is a story about Robert Allen Foster, this businessman in Ventura who had a slave-man that lived in a hole in his backyard. I don't remember if this made it in the record, but the interviewee, Mr. John Darby, Jordan's dad, described him as an "evil David Crosby." He was this scumbag who owned a couple thrift stores in town and did business with Jordan's dad because Mr. Darby owns a thrift store too. I think Foster was a musician or something. But the interview samples are just from Mr. Darby's memory, so it's all kind of hazy, but fairly accurate. Our friend Drake went to the Ventura city library and looked through the microfilm until he found all the articles about the guy. It was crazy to read the newspaper articles chronologically, as this story unfolded.

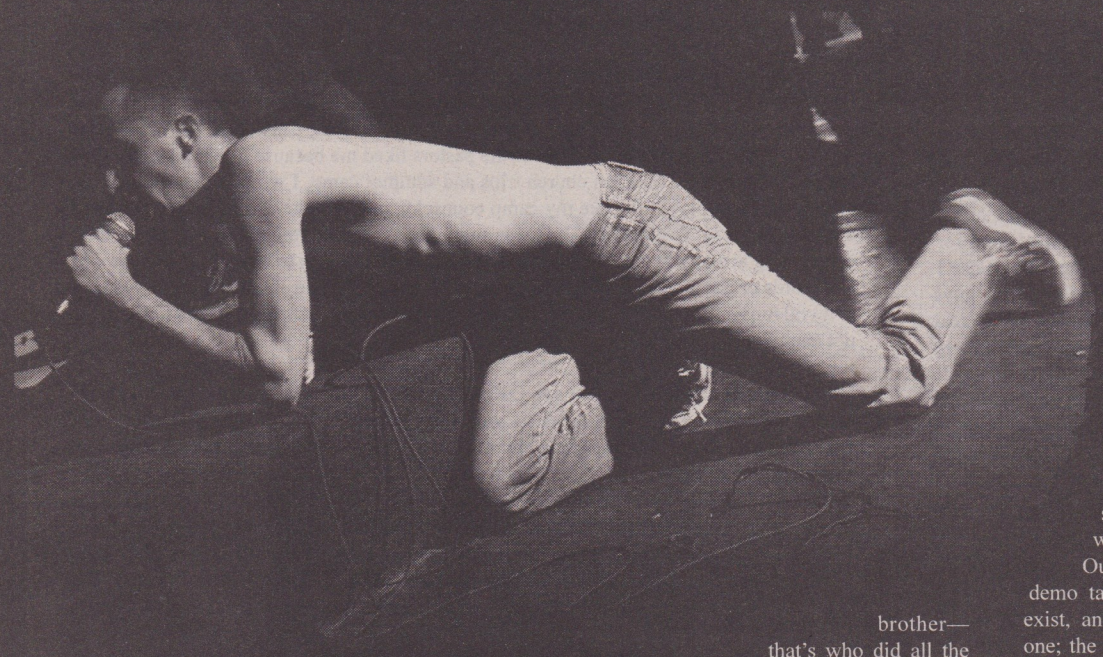


Photo by Jason Penner

The story is that there was this single father, with two girls, like age 3 and 7, and they were homeless, living in the riverbed in a broken-down car. Foster somehow met the man, and offered him a job and gave him a car and gave him a place to live. So the first article makes the guy out to be this local humanitarian and it was a real feel-good piece. Several months go by and there is this new article in the paper about how this single father murdered Foster, and everyone is in shock because this nice guy who helped out a man and his family was murdered by that same guy who helped him. Foster was molesting both of the daughters of the previously homeless man, who lived in like a guesthouse or something. The father walked into a building where Foster was and found him and yelled something like "you raped my daughter!" and shot him.

Eventually it came out that Foster kept this man, a different man, in a pit in his backyard. Foster had the guy's head shaved and completely painted white, and something like "slave" was written on his chest or something. The guy was chained in there and had been for some time. This guy Foster used to show him off to close friends, like "hey, check this out," and the friends were so afraid of Foster that no one would say anything. I guess by the time the pit-man got out he was a bit feral. I'm trying to get this as correct as possible but I don't know where those articles are now. But Foster commissioned an artist from Santa Barbara to paint a picture of a giant tree with the faces of his employees on it with Foster omnipotently watching over, and he was wearing a wizard's hat.

Anyway, the guy that shot him only got like eight months in the county jail or something like that, some extremely light sentence, because it was more or less self-defense. What else did you ask? Oh, Drew Darby is Jordan' older brother—that's who did all the lettering in the 7" booklet. I used to live with Drew. People always think he and Jordan and I are brothers. Jordan and I taped Mr. John Darby talking about the story, and I think he was hamming it up a bit, if I may say so. It was pretty great, he was using great language throughout the whole thing.

MRR: Yeah, it definitely has the impression of some weird sample from some movie... About what year did all this craziness happen?

I think it was 1993 or 1994.

MRR: Woah, I'd imagined like in the '60s or something.

No way, that's what makes the whole thing crazy, is that it was just a boring old year and a boring old time, the 1990s. Jordan went over to the guy's house one time to a garage sale. Oh, I guess Robert Foster also had this horrible rock band, and he thought they were the next Beatles or something but everyone else thought they really sucked. Like the other members didn't even like the music.

MRR: Any idea how it wasn't discovered that his guy had a dude living in a pit in his backyard?

Like I said, everyone around the guy was terrified of him. He would threaten people and I think he had some assault charges brought on him or something, but it's a total David Koresh or David Berg situation—like, as an outsider, you'd think, "This guy is filming these five-year-old girls taking their clothes off, why doesn't someone turn the guy in?" but the people involved with [someone like Foster], they have this power over them. The guy was essentially a cult leader, without any established religious beliefs. He had all the signs; he was charismatic, convincing, and preyed on people who were in unfortunate situations.

MRR: Can you talk a little about future plans for the band, and also give a quick overview of your discography?

We've got big plans, Chris, big plans. Our LP should be out by the end of November on Parts Unknown, we have a CD-EP/book coming out on Deer Healer, with Roderick McClain contributing the art for the whole thing, we are supposedly doing some polycarbonate record, which is something like a flexi that is made by an old man and his washing machine in New Zealand, that's going to be live extended versions of the Deer Healer single songs, and something else on Deer Healer, but we're not sure exactly what though.

Our discography is as follows: 2005 demo tape, which I think only two copies exist, and none of the band members have one; the *Permission* 7" self-released on Cold Vomit Records, the Deer Healer singles-series 7" on Deer Healer; the *Subordinate* 7" on Painkiller Records, and the *Philistine* LP on Parts Unknown Records.

MRR: An EP/book?

Yeah, it's going to be an extended version of one of the songs on the LP and a cover song, which, if I can be honest, is pretty excellent. I think I'm the only person, Mike Priehs included, who isn't slightly disappointed by the cover, but it's good, believe me. Roderick McClain is compiling a book of art that's going to go with it. It was Mike's idea. I'm really excited about that. Oh, wait, I need to say two things: First of all, Mike and Abby Priehs performed whistles and other instrumentation on the LP song "All the Crime in the World." Jordan and I forgot to credit them on the layout for the pre-release copies. Second, I was in email correspondence with a boy named Michael from Tampa, Florida, and I think I offended him. He asked if Dry-Rot would ever come to Florida and I said I was afraid of it because there are too many deadbeat dads there. Michael, if you read this, I am sorry and it was only a joke.

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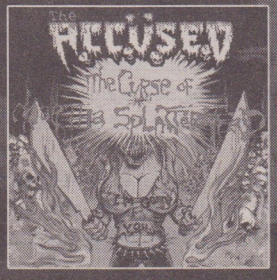


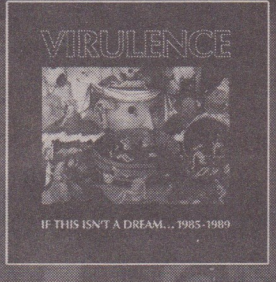
The Accused — THE CURSE OF MARTHA SPLATTERHEAD

Martha Splatterhead returns! The pioneering kings of Splatter Rock **The Accüsed** are back from the wrong side of the grave! **The Accüsed** axe slinger and founding member *Tommy Niemeyer* has resurrected the unholy Splatterbeast with a new lineup that is an efficient killing machine! The new album *The Curse of Martha Splatterhead* contains even more face ripping riffs, more brutal throat shredding and more intestinal morbid devourment than ever before. 14 songs clocking in at 29 minutes = FASTER, MORE VICIOUS, MORE BRUTAL than you can handle! Crushing production courtesy of *Billy Anderson* (**Melvins, Neurosis, Eyehategod, Brutal Truth, Sleep** etc.).

BLACK BREATH — RAZOR TO OBLIVION

Southern Lord is proud to present the CD release of *Razor to Oblivion*, the ferocious debut EP from Seattle's **Black Breath**! Recorded in January of 2008 *Razor to Oblivion* was released as a 12" EP on the band's own **Hot Mass Records** imprint. It quickly drew acclaim for its raw and uncompromosing blend of angry hardcore and ripping metal, informed by a steady intake of **Discharge, Poison Idea, Celtic Frost** and **Bathory**.

Southern Lord will be releasing the **Black Breath** debut full-length album *"Heavy Breathing"* in the first part of 2010. This brutal, unforgiving disasterpiece was recorded by *Kurt Ballou* (**Converge, Cursed, Trap Them** etc..) Dont sleep on this one!



VIRULENCE — IF THIS ISN'T A DREAM... 1985-1989

Virulence was originally formed in Southern California in 1985. Their primary influences were **Black Flag, The Melvins** and **Bl'ast**. They released their debut LP *If This Isn't a Dream...* on Alchemy Records that year. Shortly after the release of the album Alchemy folded and this album was lost in obscurity. This also was the end of **Virulence**. *"If This Isn't a Dream...* is a personal favorite of mine from the past." - Southern Lord label owner and **Goatsnake/sunn O)))** guitarist *Greg Anderson*. "They effectively fused the aggression and intensity of punk rock with a slow, metallic bludgeon." This reissue contains all known recordings by **Virulence** including the remaster of "If This Isn't a Dream" album, early demos and live recordings are included. The booklet contains liner notes from the dudes in the band plus tons of photos and flyers from back in the glory days of the group.

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SUGI

If you're a passionate hardcore punk, you definitely have heard Sugi's name and seen his strong use of pointillism with a distinct style. Working on band's artwork, posters, as well as fliers on an international scale, once you've seen it, it's embedded into your vision, mind, and feeling. How did this impactful illustration style develop? Also, how did he first encounter punk and develop to illustrate hardcore punk with his hands? To understand his past to present, I've conducted this interview through email. Also, we have added all of his 38 pieces that he has done cover art. I will be pleased if you were to enjoy the interview that shows Sugi's serious approach with the illustrations and read how punk illustrator "Sugi" has walked along with hardcore punk as his life.

Interviewed by Kazuhiro Doi. Reprinted from *Doll* #257.
Translation by Daiki Kusuhara

MRR: I'm sure you had done sketches in your youth but when did you start drawing as a "piece of work" or having the mind of "being looked by people"? Including the opportunity, please tell us about how it effected your activity of being the illustrator that you are today.

Sugi: Indeed, I was sketching since I was in school, but I started drawing with having the conscious of people looking at my drawings when I was around third or fourth grade, in elementary school. The reason was, because when I'd show it to people, they told me it was good, praised me, and I enjoyed that. I haven't changed that even today and probably won't change.

MRR: Was it since you lived in Hiroshima that you discovered punk music and started listening to it? Please tell us when in your life it was, the first exposure and the first band that you listened to.

Sugi: I've lived in Hiroshima before but I'm originally from Iwaguni City, in Yamaguchi prefecture. The first time I heard hardcore was during high school, when I was hanging out at my friend's house. The first bands that I heard were Confuse and Kuro, and it was shocking!

MRR: After that very shocking encounter, I'm sure you have bands, people, and record stores that led you to go further into it. Do you have any episodes during those times that were memorable?

Sugi: The band that made me go further into punk was the Sex Pistols. During high school at my friends house they showed me an issue of *Doll* magazine with pictures of Sid Vicious all covered in blood and I read his article, and since then... It changed my view in life. The first real life hardcore punk that I'd seen was Mr. Fujii of ex-Gudon that used to work at a record store called Edison. I had bought records there a few times but he looked scary and the fact that he was an ex-Gudon member made me so nervous that it was impossible to have a conversation with him. I started going to hardcore shows in Hiroshima more than a year afterwards.

MRR: When you started to listen to punk, what sort of style did you use for your drawings?

Sugi: It was during high school years and it was just my self-taught sketching and copying the style of the popular manga back then (*Hokuto No Ken*). I loved the Sex Pistols so I drew Sid and Johnny Rotten a lot.

MRR: How does the fact that you have been exposed to punk influence you as an artist?

Sugi: Before I listened to punk, I used to have a negative mind

towards the idea of originality but it changed me to have respect for originality. My perception and my view in life had changed dramatically.

MRR: Now, what sort of connection did you have to start drawing covers of punk bands? Also, please tell us the first band that you have drawn covers for.

Sugi: Around '89 one of my friends that worked at Edison had introduced me to Guy from Gudon (today in Origin of [M]) and that was the start. I brought some sample artwork to the store and had Guy have a look at it. The first drawing I did was the label for Hiroshima omnibus cassette *Nightmare Continue* released by Blood Sucker Records. Before I drew that, I only had done real life sketches and I'd had to use another method to draw the artwork, so it was pretty difficult. Regarding my debut, the idea of the drawing becoming a part of a product made me nervous and led me to go to a bookstore to use a picture of an American horror movie magazine and rearranged it with my own style.

MRR: Why did you shift your style to drawings utilizing pointillism, which has a very strong realistic Japanese style? Has *ukiyo-e* influenced you? Personally, when I see architectures of Japanese temples, it often reminds me of Sugi's artwork.

Sugi: I'm very grateful of being described as "strong." Thank you very much. I'd been drawing in western style but begun to feel some awkwardness about it. During that time, I have found a book of the Bakumatsu-era (mid 1800s) *ukiyo-e* artist, Yoshitoshi Tsukioka and was very inspired. Some of the fliers that I drew back then have obvious influences from Yoshitoshi's work. Afterwards I was reading an interview with Tom and discovered that he was also putting Yoshitoshi's name as an influence as well, I was pretty surprised. Rather than drawing in a western style, it seems to feel right when having the style of *ukiyo-e* in mind. It seems that realistic drawings have more impact than the ones that aren't drawn in that way, and it looks good, so I try to draw it in as realistic manner as is possible. I love ancient Japanese architectures. I especially want to visit Nikkoutoushougu.

MRR: Regarding color and monochrome illustrations; what's the reason you use that certain style and composition? Also the handwritten technique?

Sugi: As far as the use of color, I always have the *ukiyo-e* style in mind. As far as the style and composition, my basis is on *ukiyo-e*, the band's image, and if there's any request from the band, I try to think of something that can be arranged in both ways. The reason why I use the handwritten technique is because I have a rather primitive image towards punk and hardcore, and I didn't want to use computers. That being said, my focus is to synchronize the sound and the drawing. I have some sort of uneasiness to things that are "too digital."

MRR: Have you ever had any training for drawing before? Or is it self-taught? Tell us about your favorite artists as well.

Sugi: For a year when I was a senior in high school, I had training from my high school art teacher and learned the basics of preliminary sketching techniques. The teacher taught me how to use charcoal, pencil sketching, oil painting, 2-D drawings, and others. Before that, I had been drawing completely self-taught and when I'd compare it with other well known artists, it had a definite lack of something, but those concerns resolved after learning the proper procedures. When comparing the drawing that I had done before the time I received training and after, it looked completely different and the time that I spent on training has helped me to this day. My prefered style of drawings are pointillism and *ukiyo-e*. The artists I respect are Shigeru Mizuki and Hokusai Katsushika.

MRR: What type of materials and what is the production process you use in making your artwork?

Sugi: The materials I use are thick B5 Kent paper and G pen. First, I draw using a sharpened pencil and use the G pen to trace the lines I drew with the pencil. After I trace with the G pen to a certain point, I erase the lines that I previously drew with a pencil. After that, I edit some parts and finish it. It's a very basic knowledge but in order to not make the picture dirty, I draw from left to right.

MRR: You've done various cover art for different bands but how do you decide on the style or theme and go into production? Is it taking images from the band itself? Listening to the recording material? Taking requests from bands? Or do they just let you do whatever? I'm sure you have different approaches in this.

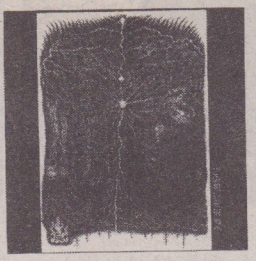
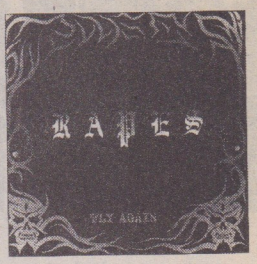
Sugi: Sometimes bands just let me do whatever I want, and there are sometimes that I get a certain request but in either case, I try to communicate and keep in touch with the band as much as possible. However, in the way of the request, it's better to have certain steps so both of us can agree on the final artwork. I haven't had problems with bands or mistakes and every time I enjoy doing the piece.

MRR: Also, has the process of working on the composition, rough drafts, and the final piece always been smooth? Or do you have any logical process that you go through? Or the opposite, do you highly regard the "feel"? I'm just curious of what your mental process is.

Sugi: So far it's been smooth. When I started drawing, I had to think a lot and thought about a lot of small issues but doing this didn't help create great artwork. "Don't think. Feel!" (Bruce Lee) is my motto. It's definitely not logical, it's more emphasized on the feel.

MRR: Do you have inspirations from other band's artwork and photos?

Sugi: I try to observe various band's cover art and photos

of any genre. Nothing comes from nothing and I try to consume as much and digest it in my own way.

MRR: Do you listen to punk while working?

SUGI: I used to listen to a lot of hardcore while working but listening to it for long hours (at least 12 hours), you feel like you've been so isolated from modern society, so recently I've been listening to the radio while working.

MRR: You've been working with many foreign bands. How do you communicate with the bands? Any issues with languages?

Sugi: When foreign bands tour here in Japan, I directly exchange addresses and communicate through email. So far, I've worked with bands from Finland, Germany, United States, and recently I've been working with a fanzine (also a band) from Greece. So far, most of the countries are able to communicate with English and I've been glad that I studied English during my school years. The only difference is the language and the job is same anywhere. I don't have any feelings of holding back.

MRR: I've heard that you changed your pen name as "Ushimitsu" during one period was there a reason behind it for doing that?

Sugi: It's because at the time I was called "Ushimitsu" as my nickname. Some people still call me by that name. I never was too particular about my pen name and I thought the use of one kanji (*Ushi* is one kanji) was pretty cool and went from "Sugi" to "丑". The reason why I went back to "Sugi" from "丑" is because of increasing interests from foreign countries and it was a hassle to explain how it's read to foreigners every time.

MRR: I'm sure you have a lot of energy and passion put into cover art and flyers but from a lot of the work that you've done in the past, is there any work that was particularly memorable? Please tell us if there is one.

Sugi: All the works are memorable but if I were to pick one, I'd say it's Warhead's *Kono Omoiwa Dokoe*... At the time, there were no cell phones and of course there was no email so I was calling their vocalist Jun from my home phone back and forth to complete the artwork. I felt that they were very passionate about it. I feel that we completed good artwork that both myself and the band are satisfied about.

MRR: This is from my own perspective but you seemed to focus on visuals that often times resemble "human life and death," is this something that you've developed naturally?

Sugi: I first started drawing this style starting from doing hardcore punk stuff and to be honest, at first, I held back. Despite drawing it myself, I felt that it was gross and disgusting. It's not something that I developed naturally. It's something that comes from the sense of the tense feeling of hardcore, especially Japanese hardcore. That certain feel seems to connect with the image of "human life and death" that's apparent in hardcore.

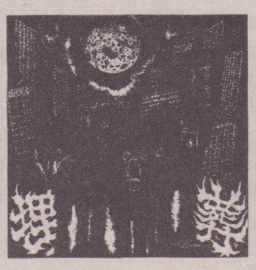
MRR: Since you reside in Hiroshima, I'm sure you experienced the Hiroshima hardcore scene in real life. From your perspective, how is the vibe and feel of Hiroshima bands, venues/show spaces, record stores?

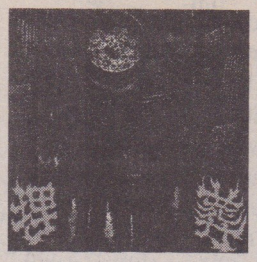
Sugi: Actually, I don't currently reside in Hiroshima. Regarding the vibe of venues/show spaces, the time that I started going to shows (around '88) it was a time of transition and there weren't any studded punks and such, but today it seems like there are more people and I see more studded punks than before. I hope that there will be more people like this. Recently I've been busy with work and the only time that I go to Hiroshima is when there are shows so I'm not too sure with the vibe at Hiroshima that well.

MRR: I apologize about that! I completely thought you still lived in Hiroshima... I've seen you at shows in Hiroshima going nuts and you seemed to like the environment of shows and it feels like you are actually enjoying the "current moment."

Sugi: Please don't observe me that carefully (*laughter*). I love going to shows. Especially hardcore. It's more about live than on records or CDs. I'm very inspired from it.

MRR: Not only limited to hardcore punk, do you have anything else that inspires you?





Sugi: Whether it's good or bad, I get inspired by everything that is around me.

MRR: I heard that there was a time that you moved up to Tokyo. Was the reason for training for your artwork?

Sugi: Eventually, it became training for my artwork, but I actually was intending to fade out from the hardcore punk scene. I was fed up with everything and after moving to Tokyo, I didn't do any artwork for more than a year and just worked my part-time job.

MRR: How did you come back to doing your work again from the dark times that you've spent previously?

SUGI: The reason was, Pushead came to Japan and invited me as a guest for an event called Super Festival "Skeletal Carnival". After going to the event, I discovered that a lot of people had seen quality in my artwork. Until then, I never even thought about people finding quality in my work and I thought my work was bad. I was able to meet Tom (the Japanese artist) and do interviews with *Doll Magazine* and that really encouraged me. After about ten years of living in Tokyo, I went back to my hometown of Yamaguchi prefecture, Iwaguni City, because I was tired of the lifestyle over there.

MRR: I never knew that you had that sort of experience... Now, I'm sure you have been inspired by Hiroshima, which had been one of the locations that the atomic bomb was dropped. Since you have been active in the area, please tell us about the personal meaning or anything that you want to express.

Sugi: One of the reason that I started to listen to hardcore was because of how I was inspired by the political approach of '80s-era bands such as Crass and Discharge. Since the time I started to listen to hardcore, I became politically conscious. Regarding the drop of the atomic bomb, many hardcore bands have songs about it and I'm very aware about the incident. Since living in Tokyo for approximately ten years, I feel like I have another angle of perspective and I also have a strong feeling about it. As a Japanese citizen, I think that more people should be aware of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Especially today, the political situation is worse than it was during the early '80s, and I wish more bands like Crass and Discharge, that carry a strong political message appear.

MRR: In your daily life, I'm sure you listen to a lot of hardcore punk but please tell us which bands you are currently into...do you listen to both Japanese and foreign bands? Do you buy releases that you haven't checked out before if you like the artwork? Are there bands that are very important and personal to you? Please name some if possible.

Sugi: Recently I've been listening to Osaka's Framtid, Mie's Acrostix, Nagoya's Clown... As far as foreign bands go, Warcry and Unit 21. I don't really have a particular division for preference. I don't think there's any point to it. I don't buy releases just based on its artwork but it's possible. So far I don't have any failures of doing that. The personal and important band to me is '80s-era Discharge. Also, it's not a band but Sid Vicious.

MRR: Out of the various shows you've been to, I'm sure you have a particular show that was very inspiring. Please tell us the ones that were memorable.

Sugi: Gudon at the Slaughter Gig. Lip Cream at the Bloody Summer Tour. Tetsu Array, Death Side at Burning Spirits. Acid, Rapes, Bastard at Gudon's last two days. Osaka's Nightmare. Kyoto's Warhead. Fukuoka's Bandit. Besides shows, I've been very inspired by the bands in person, as a human being. It changed my view in life and perspective a lot.

MRR: You have listened and viewed a lot of different hardcore punk but what part of it attracts you?

Sugi: For me, hardcore punk is "rock," itself. Everything is compiled in "Protest & Survive" by Discharge.

MRR: As an artist, what kind of activity do you intend to approach from now on? Say, doing a book that contains a story and drawings, comics, collection book of your works... What kind of approach do you have in mind?

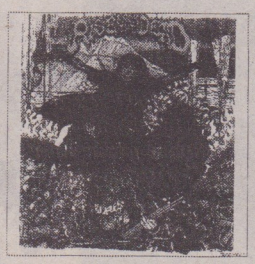
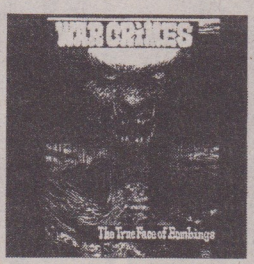
Sugi: The style that I engage today is something that was done mainly by Pushead and Tom, which is a collaboration of hardcore music and illustrations. This is what I thought was cool and I'm willing to continue this style in the future. That's also my goal. I'm not intending to do any books or comics. As far as a collection book that contains my works, I'm not intending it to release it myself. My demand of having my illustrations looked at by various people is satisfied by doing cover art, posters, and fliers.

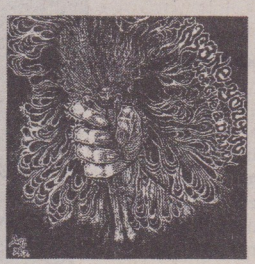
MRR: Is the activity of drawing illustrations somewhat considered as a "job" for you? Or is it something that you do naturally?

Sugi: If I were to consider this as a job, I don't think I'd be able to continue this. It's something very natural that I do.

MRR: At last, if you were to describe your artwork as a hardcore punk band, what kind of sound would it be?

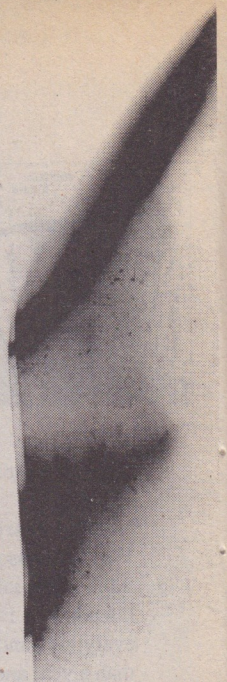
SUGI: It won't be a foreign band but a sound of a Japanese hardcore punk. Definitely something that isn't "bright" but rather "dark".

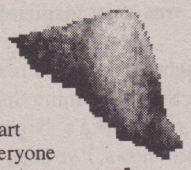


DEFENSA ABSOLUTA

One of the questions that has always been on my mind is: how can it be that so many people in Peru think that only the capital, Lima has something to offer with art, concerts, and music? The '90s show us that Lima was not the "center" of Peru. Bands from Cajamarca, Trujillo and Arequipa gave us the feeling that this hated "Lima is Peru", was finally gone. I discovered Defensa Absoluta through MySpace and the very second after I wanted support them, so with Entes Anomicos we released their very first recording, on CDR. Now after a few months we are working on the new stuff that will be a split vinyl LP with Malaysian HC Channel X. But now it's your turn to get to know these very friendly guys.
Interview by Carlos Palacios, pictures taken by the band.



MRR: How did the idea of making the band come about?



Gille: It was around 2007, when Renzo "El Duro," Jorge, Gary, Cesar and I decided to start to put together a side project (everyone played in other bands at this time), as we always were together, sharing music and life experiences, we recognized that we like old school HC a lot. So we wanted to play in an old school band together. First we wanted to only play covers, and to be honest at the beginning the band was only an excuse to hang out. Cesar left after a short time, and along came Edward. To make the band sound stronger, Fransisco "Pepi" joined and by that time we had some songs ready to be played. We recorded an EP that was distributed really well, everywhere in the world. Sadly "Pepi" left the band, and then came Renato "Tato." As you see we had a lot of line-up changes but we are really good friends with everyone, we are part of the same "crew" so when anybody left, we had quick replacements, heh heh!

MRR: Why Defensa Absoluta?
Jorge: The name came because when we decided to be a band a lot of shit happened around us, things which we weren't happy about at all, so Defensa Absoluta worked as a fight against all these negative influences. For example, our friend left the scene, and I'm not talking only about drugs but lifestyle and wrong ways of thinking. Defensa Absoluta is our way to resist all that shit.

MRR: As far as I know you guys have been playing a lot the past few months, how was the experience of doing a small tour already?
Jorge: Well, we had traveled a lot with our other bands, for example Guillermo with 3rpm and Fransisco with Contragolpe but traveling with all the guys together is way more fun! When we arrived in Cajamarca and Lima we played with great bands, met new people, tried new food, etc. I must say traveling with Defensa Absoluta for me is a really great experience. Having the opportunity to travel around Peru, discover new bands, see new places, look at other scenes is priceless.

MRR: What are your impressions about playing in Lima?
Gille: Well, Lima has a very strong scene, the biggest HC scene in Peru, next would be Trujillo (our town) and after that Cajamarca. Lima has more opportunities because it's the capital city, foreign bands go there often to play, there are so many people. Trujillo is way more small but with the same passion; people here always do more concerts and search for places to play gigs. It's very comforting to see how things are growing in the past years, not so long ago we did a gig for Die Young, we are very happy that bands are picking our town to play. I think in the future we can do bigger things here.

MRR: Do you have any funny stories from your last tour?
Tato: In Cajamarca the concert was going and Renzo and I were outside drinking so we heard Tropel playing, he went inside to pogo… After a few minutes he came out with a bloody nose but when we played he forgot any pain that he had! After we played our set, Unidad 4 (a fucking great band) played and Renzo went back to the pit and surprise, surprise came back with his nose bleeding again! Because he was a little drunk we wanted to go to the hotel and let him rest but he didn't want to. Afterwards we went to eat something and talk about the concert, and Renzo like a ghost stood up and started to walk outside. Then he wanted to go sleep, I walked with him and put him in his bed—the good thing is that the next day he was like new and had no more pain in the nose.
Guille: When we returned home we made a lot of jokes about him, it was really fun!

MRR: On this tour you shared the stage with so many bands, what are the bands that caught your attention?
Edward: Azote From Cajamarca (they are our label-mates) and Nueva Direccion also from Cajamarca both of them are full of riffs and kick ass melodies. We also played with South American legends Nueva Etica, they gave us not only great music but also a perfect performance and that inspired us.

MRR: How is the band and zine scene in your town, can you tell us a bit more about how things are going there?
Edward: Well, in our town the hardcore scene is made by ourselves, awhile ago we decided to organize our own shows the DIY way, the first show was full of emotions and grateful experiences for us, it was great to look at new faces at each new show, new bands that wanted to play, we tried always at every show to have a small merch table, now the table is not that small anymore.

MRR: Your EP was released in different formats for a couple of labels, how did this happen?
Guille: Yes it's true our EP was released on CDR and on tape; I think we had good and bad luck with that hehehe.

The first pressing came out under "Trujillo Hardcore" (Pepi's distro) and Tortuga Records (my label), it was a very DIY and trashy release, the idea was to have it all ready for our release show, but now comes the shit part...When I went that day in the morning to take the artwork I recognized that they printed all of it in the wrong sizes! Faster than a rocket I found another print house that promised to have it all ready the same day! In the end after so much stress we did the release concert with the right stuff printed. We ran out of copies so we decided to release a few homemade tape copies, and with so much luck the second pressing came from the hand of Entes Anomicos (Germany/Peru), Sp Discos (Cajamarca) and Contraorden Discos (Lima).

MRR: About your lyrics, what do they talk about?
Guille: It's all about friendship, the scene, the feeling of doing things for ourselves, and the traitors, the ex-girlfriends. Our lyrics are a reflection of how we see the world, we talk always about personal changes, that is always a positive thing, we talk as well about tolerance and respect, there are a bunch of things that we talk about, all with honesty trying to talk about different topics. We try to transmit a message of optimistic love and respect.

MRR: What are your musical influences?
Jorge: As Defensa Absoluta we take our influences from a lot of bands, and we share the same music interests so bands like: YOT, Minor Threat, Bad Brains, 7 Seconds and for Latin-American bands: Vieja Escuela, Fuerza De Voluntad, and Nueva Etica. But everyone in the band has also other influences like Gary and Edward play in a Reggae band (Alca Roots) and like to listen a lot of Spanish and Brazilian punk, or Renzo likes everything that has sound, hehehe.

MRR: How do you feel the band has changed with time?
Guille: First the band was only an excuse to hang out together. Because of the friendship that we had we took the project really seriously and we gave the band more and more time, at the time all of us played in different bands, but as we recognized that we had more fun together we decided to only work with Defensa Absoluta.

MRR: I heard that in your town the scene is growing fast, would you tell us more about it?
Guille: Yeah! It's happening all the time, from like twenty people then with time only four or five stick around, but at every show you can see new faces, trying to search for an alternative, for something new and they find that in our scene, a bunch of nice people are trying to make DIY a reality.

MRR: What do you do besides the band?
Tato: We all are students and some of us working as well. Edward studies Administration, Jorge studies Psychology, Renzo also the same, Guille studies Communication and has Tortuga Records, and I study System Engineering.

MRR: How has DIY affected your lives?
Guile: For me DIY is not expecting anything from anybody and trusting what you are doing, the best thing is to see the result of something you're doing by yourself. Here in Peru so many people and bands work this way, releasing music, merch, doing zines or radio shows. DIY is everywhere you look. Out there are so many people that make this a way to live and for the scene it's very good because there is always something new to discover and support as well.

MRR: How difficult is it for you guys to be SXE coming from a country where this way of life is not that "famous?"
Jorge: When you decide to be SXE you know that you must be against all, against all that is socially normal. So you know what to expect; a lot of stupid comments but sometimes some nice words, there are plenty of different reactions. To be honest I don't care that much about what other people think. I just live my life the way I want and the way I think is correct. The difficulty sometimes is for example at a concert searching for water and only finding beer or that some people think we are weak because we don't drink and smoke.

MRR: You're planning on doing a mini-tour to go to Chile, right?
Guille: The tour is planned for March 2010, we are searching for places and people that can help us with the whole thing, it's difficult to go to other countries to play (because of money) but we want to risk everything since it is so cool to travel and see other places, different people and new scenes. At the moment we booked some cities but we must look for some more shows to complete the tour.

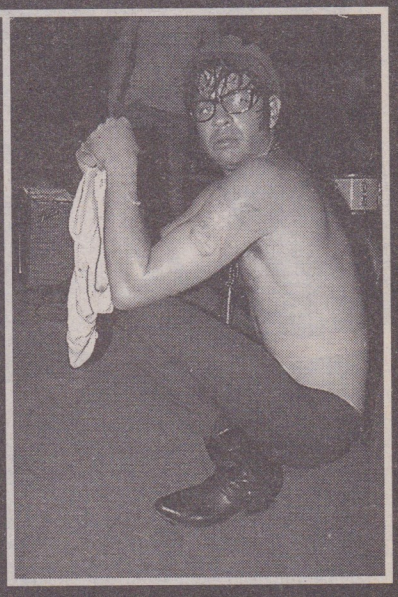
MRR: Also your new release is coming out soon, can you tell us more about it?
Edward: About the new songs, we had a little trouble because our brother Pepi left the band for personal reasons and we needed to search for somebody to fill this spot, thankfully came Rentato and with him we worked like crazy with the new tunes. Always in the good old school way this time the new songs are faster than ever and with so much energy, the lyrics are against fake people in the scene, about friendship.

MRR: Some last words for the readers?
Guille: You can listen our music at: www.myspace.com/defensaabsoluta and you can drop me a line at: xticktakfirex@hotmail.

DRUID PERFUME

The jazz-freakout-punk-explosion Druid Perfume decided to sit down with me as I spilled out belligerent questions about the scent of their unique band—or in their words, a "theatrical movement?" Hailing from Ferndale, Michigan, the experience of watching this outfit is a definite must-see if one is ever given the chance. A raucous performance with intense energy and captivating grooves leaves your eyes glued all over the room, as the band is literally diving and gyrating all over the room! Purely an entertaining phenomenon that leaves you dazed and enchanted till the bittersweet ending.

Interview by Kevin McCann



MRR: State your names. Speak it to me slowwww!
James: James, age 28, singer. I sing songs about swamps and goats and berries.
Brian: Jimbo The Clown, 40, bass.
Noah: Noah, guitar.
Wade: Wade, horns.

MRR: What's in that cigarette, Wade?
Wade: We call that a jazz cigarette.

MRR: Ahh, herbal cigarettes. And who are you?
Brettle: Brettle, drums.

MRR: Very nice. Thanks for the introduction. Metaphorically speaking, what does Druid Perfume *smell* like?
James: Generally, Jim Beam, marijuana, High Life, beautifully textured Jordache textures, Jovan Heat, which I wear constantly...drives men wild. Women hate it.

MRR: What smells good to you typically doesn't smell good to the opposite sex. You seem to play Cleveland a lot. Do you like it here?
James: It's our second show in less than a year. We like it here. It's cool.

MRR: Like many other outcast, bizarre punk groups that travel through Cleveland, you seem exclusive to playing at Now That's Class. How do the shows usually go in that fine establishment?
James: Yeah, we're the house band here (giggles). We get free pizza and six beers each.
Noah: And the enchiladas are the bees knees!

MRR: Agreed, very fine Mexican cuisine! So, I was hanging out by your merchandise table hoping you would give me something. What releases do you have out right now?
James: We're a new group. We have three singles out and a self-titled full length out on a California label called Pigs.

MRR: Where are all of your records tonight?
James: We done sold out of all of them—the singles and the full length!

MRR: That's awesome! Selling out a sold-out crowd. You drove out from Michigan to play this one show with Cleveland's Homostupids and fellow Michigander's Awesome Color. I've been to Detroit and it seems kind of happening there for music. Am I correct in this idea?
James: Not really. In the imaginations of people from other states it is, but when you live there it's not.

MRR: You don't really like it there? Would you like to relocate?
James: Nah. I mean, I dig it. It's not the Cat's Ass, but it's OK. So, what do you do? You play in a band. We played with you last time in Detroit.

MRR: That was my old band, the Dimeras. Our new band,

the Wooly Bullies, played last night. That's why I'm losing my voice—I was making the ladies swoon singing love ballads. But, we're not talking about me now.
James: Why don't we talk about you?

MRR: Because I'm interviewing you; you're not interviewing me.
James: You're getting belligerent. Why do you hate yourself?

MRR: I don't. I just don't like talking about my cooool band, ya know?
James: Neither do I. I'm in a theater group. Like acting your feelings out. Do you remember those compilations, *Pure Moods*? We're that band.

MRR: What are *Pure Moods* Comps?
James: Ya know…when you dim the lights and get your lady out? Ya get your lady out, put on our record, then get down to business.

MRR: I see. Talking about the songwriting process, how does Druid Perfume go about writing their suave musical ballads? You're kinda like a free-form jazz project. Is this an accurate description?
James: Yeah, we're definitely jazz influenced. Some of it comes about spontaneously. Brian and I come up with a lot of the ideas and bring them to practice. It's a wall of noise and I do free-form slam poetry over it.

MRR: Back in the '90s you were in a loosely similar band called the Piranhas. Does Druid Perfume stem from that group?
James: Yeah, Brian and I were in the Piranhas in the late '90s. Brian played bass and I sang. We made it through a West Coast tour, then blew up and died.

MRR: What were some of your releases?
James: *Erotic Grit Movies* was our latest release. Before that, *Piscis Clangor* was somewhat of our "swan song", but many of our fans didn't embrace it because it was "*too weird*."

MRR: Yeah, I heard a lot about the Piranhas and I picked up *Piscis Clangor* but thought it was a little too weird. But, I got *Porno Sex Movies* and really loved it. I think *Porno Sex Movies* definitely hit the mark.
James: If that's the title you wanna call it, then whatever.

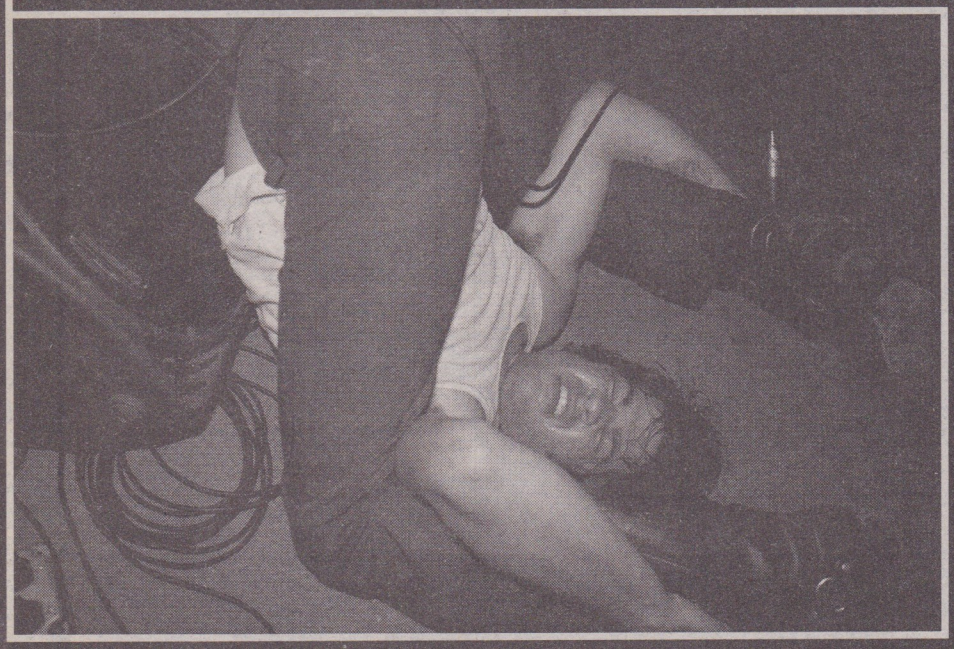
MRR: What's the title?
James: *Erotic Grit Movies*. If you liked it, you'd know what it was called.

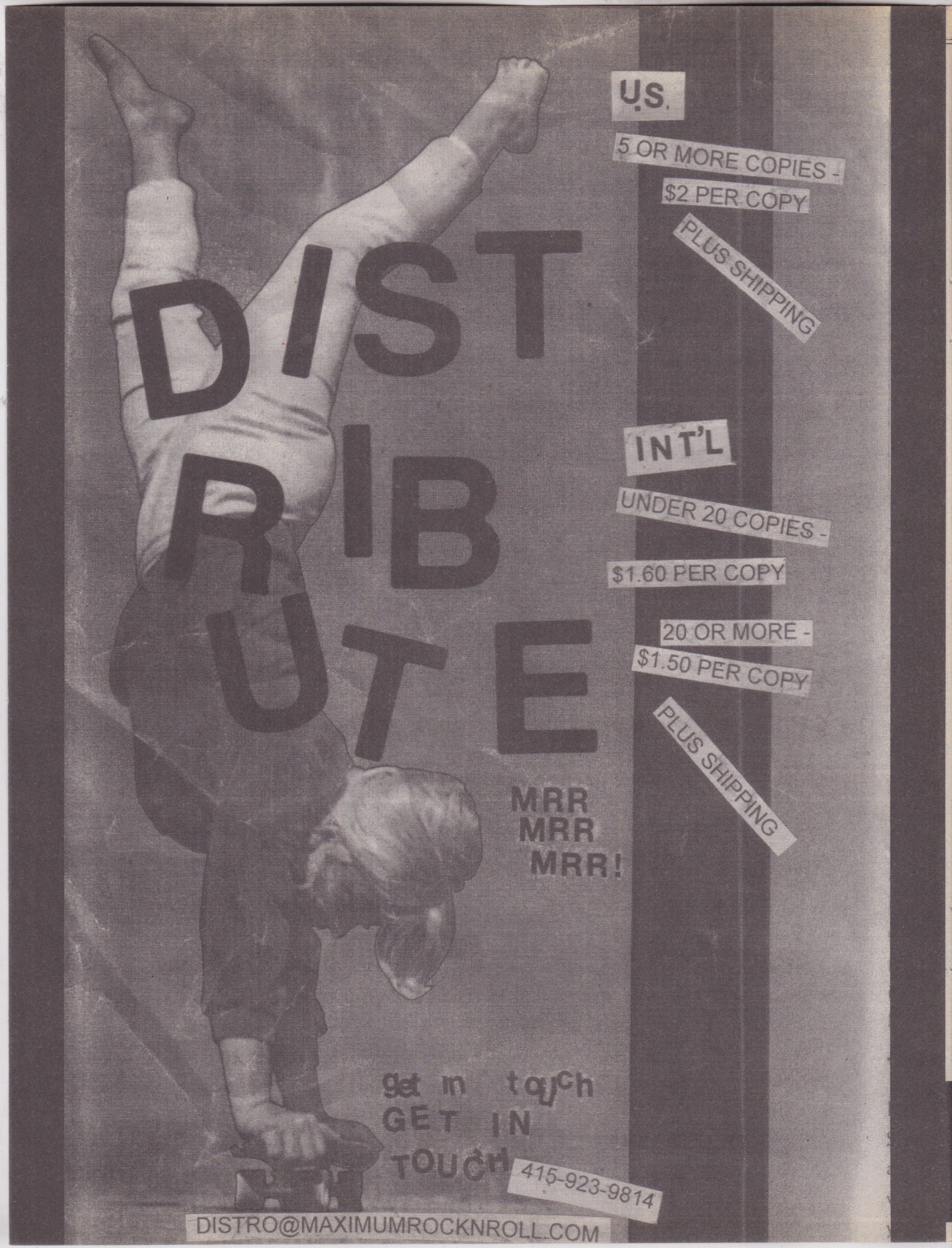
MRR: I do like it! You should be happy that I bought it!
James: You should be happy that I let you buy it!

MRR: You should be happy that I bought it from somebody that traded it in, so I bought it for half price.
James: They're in used bins everywhere. It's a phenomenon.

MRR: Let's not fight, James. We're friends now. In closing, I definitely think you have a unique sound, albeit, an acquired taste that seeps into your brain and spreads its scent throughout your body. I think you're onto something good and it's definitely catching on. Judging by all of your sold-out releases. Well done. Any last words?
Someone in the back, maybe Brian: Don't say anything about my butthole!

MRR: Deal.

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BOOKS

In Heaven Everything Is Fine: The Unsolved Life of Peter Ivers and the Lost History of New Wave Theatre
Josh Frank with Charlie Buckholtz
327 pages • $16.95
Soft Skull Press
19 West 21st Street, Suite 1101
New York, NY 10010
www.softskull.com

Peter Ivers' murder on March 3, 1983 is still unsolved. He was bludgeoned to death in his downtown Los Angeles loft. The police and homicide detectives along with a bunch of Hollywood movie people and LA punks destroyed the crime scene and as a result nothing ever came of the investigation. The detectives agreed to reopen the case for *In Heaven Everything Is Fine* author Josh Frank, but even still there seems to be little evidence. There are really no suspects. Since the recent conviction of Mia Zapata's murderer I am convinced that it was probably likewise just some random person.

While it is unfortunate that the murder of Peter Ivers will probably never be solved, the release of his life story is a revelation. Why had I never heard of Peter Ivers before? I know a lot of his work, I am familiar with his connections, I grew up in Boston, I have seen *Eraserhead* many times, and I watched *New Wave Theatre* on *Night Flight* while babysitting on many Friday nights. I know his face, but not his name, nor his story.

Ivers was a boy wonder that attended Harvard University during the '60s. As a freshman he became involved in the theater group headed by Tim Mayer. He worked as a set and lighting designer, but was part of a group of many soon to be famous actors. One of his best friends at Harvard, Doug Kenney, would go on to found *National Lampoon* magazine and write the scripts for *Animal House* and *Caddyshack*.

Ivers was brought up on music. His mother would play different pieces for him after school. He hung out with Muddy Waters and Little Walter in Boston. One summer he decided he would learn to play harmonica. He mastered it and became one of the best. In fact, when Ivers' mentor Little Walter passed away, Muddy Waters considered Ivers the best living player. That is high praise considering Walter practically invented the electric blues harp.

Ivers wanted to be a musician. While still at Harvard he got a two record deal with Epic. His first album *Knights of the Blue Communion* was released in 1969. The critics loved it, but no one bought it. He was dropped by the label before his second album *Take It Out On Me* was released. Ivers then moved to Los Angeles.

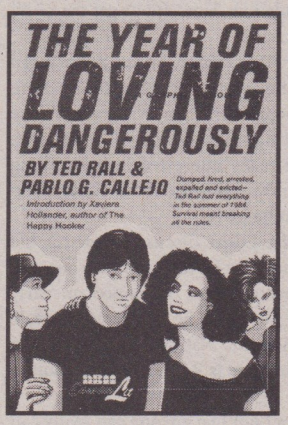
He began scoring film for people at AFI and got another record deal with Warner Bros. Ivers got what could have been his big musical break opening for Fleetwood Mac while promoting his third album *Terminal Love* at the Hollywood Bowl in 1975. He decided to perform wearing a diaper in a strange pre-punk move that resulted in him being booed by the Fleetwood Mac crowd. He also opened for the New York Dolls in similar attire, but that crowd was more open to the spectacle.

While his musical career didn't completely take off, he did gain some notoriety for writing a song for the film *Eraserhead*. The song of "The Lady In The Radiator (In Heaven)" is one of Ivers'. He also sings it in the film. Devo liked the song so much they performed it every night of their 1979 tour. If you ever wondered how John Belushi met Fear, the answer is Peter Ivers introduced them through the television show he hosted *New Wave Theatre*. And the list of his very famous and infamous friends goes on. It is amazing that Peter Ivers is not better known.

Ivers probably gained most of his infamy hosting the LA cable access television show *New Wave Theatre*. The show debuted in 1980 the same year as MTV, and although a cable access show it became so popular it eventually moved on to the USA Network. The show featured Ivers delivering odd monologues then introducing live performances by punk band such as Fear, the Plugz, 45 Grave, Angry Samoans, the Mentors, Dead Kennedys and lots more. Ivers would then interview the bands asking them silly questions like, "What is the meaning of life?" The punks would be funny, mad, annoyed, or whatever, but Ivers would keep at them. During one interview Fear tackled Ivers and pretended to be beating him up. Since Ivers had a punk inclination already after the Fleetwood Mac performance, he fit in. The punks gave him attitude, but I am sure they were happy just to be on TV.

In Heaven Everything Is Fine: The Unsolved Life of Peter Ivers and the Lost History of New Wave Theatre is delivered in an oral history style. Different characters recall different events throughout Peter Ivers' life and the quotes are amassed to form the story. The authors fill in some of the blanks with a narrative assembled from the various interviews. Unfortunately, the authors tend to be too dismissive of punk in general. They comment that the LA punks were just into violence and homophobia, citing Fear's singer Lee Ving's constant use of the term "fag" as proof that he was homophobic. For all I know he probably was, but I always thought his macho thing was a shtick. If you ever saw him sing on TV's *Fame* you'd probably question it too. But I guess that's the result of the limited perspective of the authors who were in high school in the early '90s and had just started getting into the Pixies. Punk was commercial by the time they heard of it, so seeing a band like Fear provoke people by acting like idiots is probably lost on them.

Now someone needs to release the episodes *New Wave Theatre* on DVD. When you think of all the terrible TV shows that are available, there really is no excuse. The world needs to see Peter Ivers.
—Carolyn Keddy



A Year of Loving Dangerously
Ted Rall and Pablo G. Callejo
127 pages • $18.95
NBM Comics Lit
40 Exchange Pl. Ste. 1308
New York, NY 10005

It's easy to assume that Ted Rall, as one of the stalwart *MRR* columnists, has some serious punk rock bonafides from back in the day. As I only know him from his column and his comics it's hard to know what they are. Especially within the deep core of long term columnists it's easy to construct some halycon SF days when Tim Yo, Mykel Board, and Ted Rall all hung out doing early MRR radio and going to Flipper shows or something. Ultimately that's just some punk rock wet dream of a black unknown. *A Year of Loving Dangerously* fills in some of the blanks. With art by Pablo Callejo, it's Rall's story of a year in his life when he dropped out of college, ate on pennies, and lived day-to-day, or bed-to-bed, via a series of sexual liasons.

Although Rall, or at least his character in the book, at some point mentions that he's not a romantic, but the tale is definitely a "Romantic" one, with a capital R like Rilke and Goethe, of living by one's wits outside conventions of society and riding the line between despair and freedom. Like his fellow Columbia drop out, Jack Kerouac, it's a quasi-autobiographical story of self-realization through sex and non-conformity, with less poetry and jazz and more punk rock and self-deprecation. Therefore your enjoyment of this graphic novel will depend on your willingness to buy into that sort of fantasy.

I wish I could construct some complaint about the casual way Rall's character seems to exploit his relationships with the women he sleeps with, but it seems like the sexual adventures are pretty tame and if anything the women seem more savvy than Rall—or that as a fellow Columbian that his story of Ivy League despair seems like a little bit of stretch. In the end though this graphic novel just doesn't do much for me. A lot of people have to hit a wall of societal conventions and bullshit before

they find a happier more fulfilling path; most don't get to sleep with tons of women to do it.
—Ben Howell

No One Rules: New York Hardcore 1981-1984
100 pages
Colossal Man Press

Not much to say except that this book is a cool little collection of random ephemera from the first wave of NYHC. Contained within are things like flyers, handwritten lyrics, photos, posters, and artwork, and things like that. I like collections like this, things like *Fucked Up and Photocopied* and *Punk Is Dead, Punk Is Everything*. Collections of things that were meant to be instant and disposable but have somehow stood the test of time. And the fact that this book stays within the bounds of one specific time and place makes it that much cooler. Worth tracking down, especially for NYHC heads.
—Justin Briggs

Cheesemonger: A Life on the Wedge
Gordon Edgar
230 pages • $17.95
Chelsea Green Publishing
chelseagreen.com

What do you want to be when you grow up? That is the question asked of almost every child. Yet how many of them really know what they want at such a young age? I'd envy the few if I didn't know somewhere in the back of my mind their destiny was forced on them by overbearing parents. Gordon Edgar didn't want to be a cheesemonger when he was a kid. In fact, he didn't really want to work with cheese when he got a job selling it. But that's where he ended up. How did he get there? By way of punk rock.

Cheesemonger: A Life on the Wedge is the story of Gordon Edgar, a Northern California punk and political activist who bluffed his way into getting a job selling cheese at worker-owned Rainbow Grocery Cooperative in San Francisco. As he admits in the first pages, he just wanted to work at Rainbow Grocery Cooperative. He didn't know anything about cheese and wasn't really interested in it. Working with cheese was a way in the door. He began to study and learn about cheese, and like all good punks he did it himself. Now it is what he loves.

Throughout *Cheesemonger: A Life on the Wedge* Edgar discusses how his life has influenced the way he approaches his work. That may be the key to his success. Growing up as a punk in '80s Northern California Edgar developed an early distrust for authority. A defining moment for him was when he was arrested while at Rock Against Reagan outside of the 1984 Democratic National Convention in San Francisco. He started to get political. Of course, there is Reagan's connection to cheese—government cheese that is.

A cheesemonger is someone who sells cheese, but not just anyone can really call her/himself a cheesemonger. After a discussion with a fellow "cheese punk" Edgar discovers that in addition to knowledge and experience with cheese, in order to call yourself a cheesemonger you need to have done three things: killed a rat in the walk-in cooler, thrown a sales rep out of the store, and bleed from a cheese wound. Edgar's descriptions of how he achieved his cheesemonger status are funny and painful. Telling an Italian cheese importer to "get the fuck out of our store" is almost as fun as having an 80-pound Parmigiano Reggiano drive a tooth pick through a finger is painful. And a lot less bloody.

As Edgar's love for cheese and his new job develops, he becomes more aware of the contradictions involved. Over the time he has worked as a cheesemonger the cheese business started booming. People are eating more cheese. Working retail has its share of challenges with customers and sales reps. Never mind balancing between the cheese snobs and someone who would just rather eat basic Monterey jack. Then there are the farmers and cheesemakers to consider as well. Each person is crucial to the business and Edgar manages to see things from all angles. He is not afraid to point out all the seemingly incongruous aspects. He gives you a lot to think about next time you are out shopping. But he also reminds you that the best cheese for you is the one you like to eat.

As an additional bonus at the end of each chapter, Edgar discusses a few cheeses in more depth. Describing the taste as well as the price and recommending similar cheeses in case the ones mentioned aren't available in your town. It's a good thing too because after reading about all these delicious cheeses, you are going to want to try them all. Edgar's love for cheese is contagious.
—Carolyn Keddy

You're Wondering Now: The Specials from Conception to Reunion
Paul Williams
310 pages • $22.75
Cherry Red Books
www.cherryred.co.uk

Written to commemorate the 30th anniversary of this legendary British band's formation (and recent reformation), this is an engrossing read. It's written from the perspective of fan first and foremost, with critic coming in as a close second.

Half of the book is taken up with the band's history. This encapsulates each member's history and subsequent acquisition into the ranks of the Specials. The early days present a virtual gang mentality with united band members. The book then charts the band's progress from clubs to supporting the Clash on the "On Parole" tour, the formation of Two-Tone Records (plus Madness, Selecter, Beat, Bodysnatchers, et al), the tumultuous US tours, inter-band friction, the success of the epochal "Ghost Town," and it culminates with the split as Jerry Dammers appears to implode within his own ego, fragmenting the band beyond repair.

The remaining half charts, in considerable detail, the post-Specials history of each band member. It's apparent as the story unfolds that there seems to be noticeable friction (albeit through management) between Dammers and Terry Hall. It could be said that this friction was at the core of Dammers not reuniting with the rest of the band.

From there we get a studied chapter on the reformation. It's a convulsive story with Dammers seemingly neurotic, possessive, and a tad jealous while the rest of the band just want to get out and relive all that made it such a formidable unit in the first place.

The book is filled out with a foreword from British comedian and long-time Specials fan Phill Jupitus, an analysis on the origins of ska, a massively detailed discography (including bootlegs), full gig guide, testimonies from notable fans, and rare photos from both the personal collection of Roddy "Radiation" Byers and from the initial reformation shows.

Williams is well qualified to write this comprehensive guide. Back in 1995 he wrote the original version of this book, was editor of *Street Feeling* ska zine in the '90s, is co-administrator of the Specials website, and attended the 2008 Isle Of Wight Bestival Festival where the band made its initial comeback performance shrouded in secrecy. He has an acute grasp on each character within the band. While he clearly revels in the positives of each person, he does not shy away from the negatives be it the domineering genius of Dammers, the sarcastic and tortured aesthetic of Hall, or Radiation's solid down-to-earth desire to simply live the rock 'n' roll lifestyle and all of its hedonistic trappings. Of all seven members it's guitarist Lynval Golding who comes across as the most sincere. Often the butt of racial issues (with one leading to extreme violence), it was he who was determined to see the reformation through to fruition.

Williams also highlights the political quagmire that entrenched the UK at the time. His observations on Thatcherism are particularly potent and his detailing of the nationwide 1981 riots eerily captures the distressing prophecies of "Ghost Town" to great aplomb.

The question as to whether this is an essential read for even the most casual Specials fan is not in dispute. The book is naturally going to draw comparisons to bassist Horace Panter's excellent autobiography. Rather that recommend one over the other, the books actually compliment each other. While Horace's gives a specific insider's perspective, Williams' offers a broader overview littered with details and insights that Panter's omits.

This is an authoritative, objective book written with enthusiasm and drive. If you realize the Specials was a band of integrity and intelligence that fought against an oppressive conservative government while making the entire country want to dance, then you'll want to read this.
—Steve Scanner

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MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

As the President of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™, it is that time of the year when I release our list of best films of 2009 in order to influence Academy nominations. Elsewhere in this issue of *Maximum Rocknroll* the shitworkers are listing their favorite records of 2009 so why not join in on the fun?

Here is the list of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™ best films of 2009.

1. Cleveland's Screaming

As you will see from this year's list, I am very much in support of individual scenes documenting themselves. When it comes to punk it is way too big of a thing to condense into two or so hours. Plus the small scenes are so much more interesting to a person like me who is already acquainted with the traditional story. **Cleveland's Screaming** covers the Cleveland/ Akron, Ohio early '80s punk scene. The bigger Cleveland bands are gone by then so are merely mentioned as an influence. It is the lesser-known bands that get the focus. The bands don't take themselves too seriously, even in hindsight. It was fun. It was what they did. Plus "off the door" is still my favorite punk move. Too funny.

2. You Weren't There: A History Of Chicago Punk 1977-1984

Yes, I wasn't there, but the film doesn't hold that over my head. I was in Boston at the time and like all cities we had our own punk scene. Not surprisingly, I can relate to what was happening in Chicago at the same time. It is always interesting to see how it went down somewhere else. I really appreciate that it is insinuated that the DJs started the Chicago punk scene. Before there were bands, the DJs who worked at a record store started playing punk records at a dance club so everyone had a chance to hear them. The DJs seem to always get overlooked in these things. But similarly I was introduced to punk by radio DJs. Then the bands developed, the rivalries started and then the punks started getting younger, much to the dismay of the ones who were there in the beginning. It is another interesting and fun punk history. The "special edition" DVD comes with a soundtrack LP. Really cool.

3. Goner Fest 4

I am somewhat ashamed to admit it, but I think it will take ten to twenty years to truly appreciate the greatness of this DVD. I have seen almost all the bands featured here live in the last few years so spending my time watching them on TV doesn't seem that appealing right now. I can still remember what the bands are like live. But I think later on when all these bands have broken up or worse, I will be able to look back more nostalgically at 2007 with the same whimsy I now look back on 1991 or whatever. I will be so happy to have such a well made, great sounding and shot document of the time. Plus the DVD comes with a CD of the live performances too. I think 2010 will be the year I finally go to Goner Fest.

4. (Untitled)

(Untitled) is a very funny look at the New York art and experimental music scenes. While it is easy to point out the absurdity and pretentiousness of both, (Untitled) also manages to balance that with an understanding of where each character is coming from. You may not understand their work, but you know they are at least sincere. Plus the ending is an excellent non-Hollywood one.

5. Love Story

I had no idea that people thought Love should have been as popular as The Doors before I saw this documentary. I am still skeptical, but the story is incredible. Through drugs and self-sabotage Love never made it. They had a huge following in Los Angeles. They were signed to a major label. They recorded a hit song "Little Red Book." Yet, the lack of touring is reputed to be why they never "made it". Of course, now many years later they are more than famous.

6. Zero Boys Live At The Pizza Castle – 1981

An amazing live performance by the Zero Boys recorded before the release of "Vicious Circle." Simply shot with one VHS camera, but restored so it looks as good as anything that would have been shot today. The band is excellent and the crowd although mostly subdued are having a great time. I saw Zero Boys for the first time this year and even though they were fantastic, I wish I had seen them at this time. Now I have, sort of.

7. Whatever Works

I have been really enjoying the non-Woody Allen Woody Allen films of the last few years. I hear other critics talking about how Larry David simply plays Woody Allen in this film. I try to imagine that and I can't. Allen would have come off as a curmudgeonly, annoying old man. I think David probably due to his TV persona is able to believably pull off the older man Boris Yellnikoff who decides to take in a teenage run away Melodie St. Ann Celestine. Sure, it's creepy, but David's character Boris resists it enough that he doesn't fall into that typical older man/ younger woman relationship that Hollywood always shoves down our throats. The awakenings of Melodie's repressed parents are the one subplot I could have done without, but otherwise a good film.

8. Chatterbox Biography of a Bar: San Francisco 1986-1990

The story of a San Francisco bar that was christened by Johnny Thunders and home for the city's hard rock bands. Although not a scene I was involved in, I can relate. I am still nostalgic for clubs that were the center of my music world at different times of my life. The film manages to capture San Francisco, as it was when I first moved here. Much rougher and dirtier than it is now.

9. Capitalism: A Love Story

I don't think anyone really wanted to hear about it so most people used the excuse that Michael Moore is annoying to ignore this film. That's fine, but I am actually interested in why we got into this mess in the first place. It is depressing and looks like there is really nothing we can do about it. Is there no turning back? When it continues to seem bad and worse, that is the time you really need Moore's brand of comic relief. I am not the type that enjoys harassing politicians and businessmen. Moore does. So let him do it. The film does have a few inspirational moments. A foreclosed on family and their neighbors stand up to the bank and take back control of the house. Workers standing up for themselves and getting their back pay. Some things can be done. People need to start doing them.

10. Whip It

I was skeptical about this film. I only went to see because I had a few hours to kill, it was playing at the local Rep Theater and I didn't think it would be

too offensive. But the story ended up being a good one. A small town Texas teenage beauty pageant contestant discovers roller derby. She joins a team behind her parents' back (of course) and gets good at it, but eventually her two worlds collide. The themes of female bonding, family relationships and doing what you want could have all been easily dumbed down by the Hollywood machine. Amazingly, they weren't. The ending was also well done.

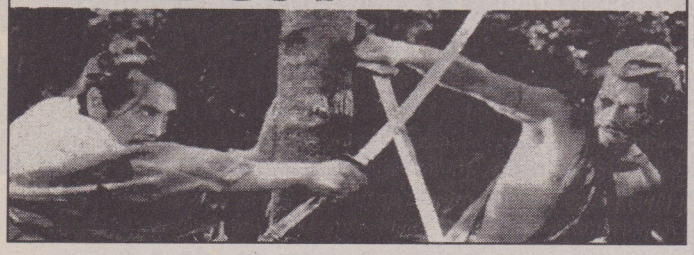
Honorable mention:

Great Australian Albums: The Saints (I'm) Stranded

I am not including this in the main list since it was released it 2007, but I finally saw it this year. I guess it takes a long time for these things to make it all the way from Australia. Part of a documentary series that looks at classic albums and examines how they came into being. **Great Australian Albums: The Saints (I'm) Stranded** focuses on the political atmosphere in Brisbane at the time, the band members background, how they met, etc. All the events leading up to the recording of "(I'm) Stranded". It features interviews with the main band members Chris Bailey and Ed Keupper, album producer Rod Koe plus a bunch of Australian musicians influenced by The Saints. The documentary also includes a bunch of incredible live footage from the time. It renewed my love for the album.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



THE CASE FOR THEATERS

In case you haven't noticed, going to the movies is beginning to the average person hit hard in the pocketbook. I don't want to get mired in that whole "those were the days" attitude, thinking back to a time when movies were cheaper and better than they are today; fact is, movies – with a few variations in time – been about the same quality. But a recent visit to a local, first-run theater convincingly makes its own case. Recently, I actually paid to see the new James Cameron film, **Avatar**, in 3D projection – really, the best way to catch all the nuances in a $500 million epic. It's also about the least "punk" approach to filmmaking I can imagine.

Avatar won't be on my list of even moderately recommended movies of the year, it does sensitize you to the gravity of the situation. It's become increasingly tempting to ignore the whole issue of paying for a film when you can watch a promotional or downloaded copy. I'm not that much of a purist to ignore the opportunity of getting a good deal, and if you see a lot of movies, temptations abound. A bit torrent takes only a few hours to download, and the video quality is usually okay when you're watching on a cheap home computer. Aside from which, you don't feel quite as ripped off when you get stuck with lousy movie.

Some statistics suggest that the "gray market" in films is probably exerting a significant effect on profits (though it's more likely that it's simply depressed profit *margins* – an important distinction). The industry has tried to clamp down on peer-to-peer file sharing, sometimes engaging into lawsuits with vulnerable plaintiffs, or conveying cease-and-desist notices to a variety of offenders. But with probably tens of thousands of movies being downloaded on P2P networks every day, the situation is not unlike trying to reinforce a levy as the bedrock spouts leaks. News items on "piracy" are paraded in the *Wall Street Journal*, but organizations like the Recording Industry Association of America – which keeps tabs on such things – can't seem to do much to stop the tide of file sharing.

I support the privacy of P2P networks. I also think that the film industry has failed to acknowledge its robust asset: movies seen in theaters. It would seem to be a no-brainer, but no amount of legal actions or procedures against computer users will ever push things back to the old days, when poor quality VHS bootlegs from China were the only thing they had to worry about. However, in *theaters*, the primacy of film is still relatively unchallenged.

A big screen is always better. Nobody seemed to worry much, in those halcyon days, when airlines begin showing edited feature films during longer flights. You'd watch as a captive audience was forced to endure derivative Hollywood comedies on a roll-down screen. Now, you'll find LCD video displays on the backs on many plane seats; in short, things haven't changed all that much. You're still stuck watching tiny images on a tiny screen.

It doesn't matter if you watch your movies on an iPod Touch or a television display. Even if you're lucky enough to own a forty-inch monitor with stereo speakers, the image in a movie theater is always going to be brighter, have vastly more detail, and bring you closer to what the director (or producer) intended. And if you're watching a wide-screen movie, even the best video will never come close to being satisfactory.

Audience reactions rule. As we devolved to a place where someone can actually own a favorite movie, the ownership came with certain limitations. Especially with comedies or other genres dependent on audience reaction, the idea of personal video becomes an empty promise. There's a social element to going to a movie theater.

Audience feedback absolutely makes a film more effective. The 1960 Korean film, **The Housemaid**, had a limited revival several years ago. At my showing of the only extant copy in existence, the audience giggled and shrieked as if the film were brand new. Members of the audience staggered through the lobby, several saying they couldn't believe what they just saw. Several years later, I saw the same film again, thanks to a streaming video site called *The Auteurs*. On video, it was still good, but sans a big audience, the film lost something. Of course, it's still a great film, but I learned that an audience, while at times annoying, is a community that makes even the most flawed films more palatable. Not too long ago, I had a chance to see the 3D trasher from 1954, **The Creature from the Black Lagoon**, in a theater – and smart-ass remarks shouted from the audience made it even more enjoyable.

A good theater always offers a better movie experience. San Francisco offers a wide variety of theaters covering the history of film. One or two hark back to the talkies, where you could watch a film preceded by live organ. Several neighborhood theaters promised stereo sound. The international theaters range from auditoriums that keep the lights down to avoid encounters with large insects, to high-tech international theaters with postage-stamp screens. Finally, there are theaters that most people seem to enjoy the most, equipped with state-of-the-art stereo, staggered seats (so no one obscures your view of the screen), and overstuffed seats.

If you're going to spend your valuable time watching a film, it only makes sense that you'll see it in environment appropriate to the experience. (On the other hand, a bad theater almost always makes for an inferior film experience.)

Of course, there will always be inferior movies. The big problem with the inevitable clunker is the issue of taste. But the good news is that even really crappy films will be better when projected in the appropriate venue. Some theaters are racking up a handsome business playing black and white noir films from the forties and fifties – the kind of movies neglected by the DVD revolution – but perfect for older theaters.

To repeat: a good theater is better than a video screen any day of the week.

Theaters are the ideal place to enjoy punk films. We've probably seen enough punk films to realize how important it is to see them in legitimate movie theaters. From its beginnings, punk has always been about community, and seeing gigs in clubs has been a tacit assumption. You kind of get that same rush when a good punk film is paired with the right theater. When I saw Julian Temple's **Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle** at the Victoria theater in San Francisco when it came out, it was the perfect match of movie and venue. Sell-outs every show.

At same time, video is about the worst place to see punk films. Video divorces a film of its social context, sucks away any musical excitement, and most of its emotional impact. (Conversely, video may be the *best* place to see porn films – which, when think about it for awhile, kind of clinches my argument.)

It's an issue of personal values when you're dealing with file sharing and the movies, and there are some pretty good arguments on both sides. Frankly, I'm not completely convinced by either. But I've seen quite a few films in a variety of formats; any cinephile will find more satisfaction from the theater experience than its alternatives. For punks, this goes double.

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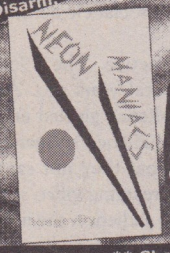

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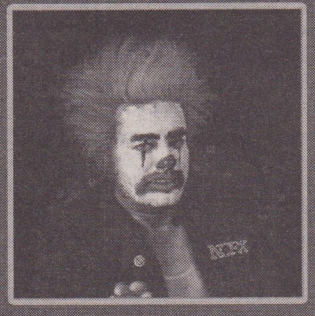

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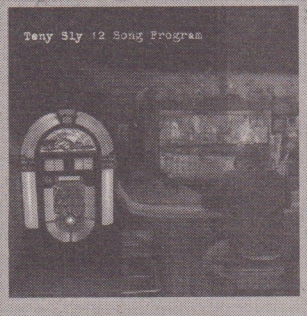

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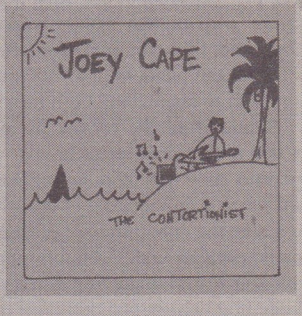

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ACUTE – EP

When I was in Japan recently, ACUTE was one of those mind-blowing bands that you often encounter there having never heard of before, with a fearless female vocalist giving 110% as the band just wails unrelentingly with a professionalism that few in the world can match. Stunned by the ferocity, I later learned this Nagoya-area band contained the rhythm section of TOMORROW, who still rank in the top ten—if not *five*—Japanese live bands that have ever come to the US—their entire set at Gilman years back was a total jolt of non-stop energy from start to finish. ACUTE carries that manic high energy, but filter it through the interesting evolution currently happening in Japanese hardcore, with bands like PAINTBOX or PROTESS incorporating elements of J-pop and melody into the songwriting. This in no way detracts from the impact of the four songs here, which devastatingly blast by with screamed and sung vocals howling to keep the pace. A beautiful looking record that also marks the interesting way Japanese bands are also continuing to step outside and evolve the standard punk ideas—it looks adventurously like a 1960s movie poster for a neo-mod/pop-art Kabuki crime movie or something, in a neat gatefold sleeve with a mirrored insert. The recording might lack a little of the bite of the band's live show, but can't be recommended enough for its intensity and creativity. *Ace*. (KS)
(Answer)

ANALENA – "Inconstantinopolis" CD

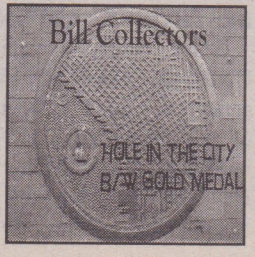
Mid-tempo screamo from this Croatian/Slovenian band that's way more melodic than the discordant, techy metallic crap I usually associate with the genre. I actually found the tunes to be pretty agreeable—equal parts choppy post-hardcore and sweeping emo—and the vocalist is good when she doesn't ruin everything with ridiculous screams (which unfortunately happens in every song except the spoken word track at the end). Kinda corny lyrics touch on both personal and vaguely political topics. The little note in the CD asked for an "honest review," and honestly I'm a little confused why the press sheet calls the album a "glowing celebration of DIY ethics" but notes it's digitally distributed by IODA, a company partnered with Sony Music Entertainment whose "retail partner network includes all major digital music services like iTunes, Amazon MP3 and MySpace Music and mobile carriers and outlets such as Verizon Wireless, Sprint and Nokia." (CS)
(Moonlee)

A.O.A. – "Axis of Ascendancy 1982-1990" 2xCD+DVD

A.O.A. were one of those DISCHARGE inspired anarcho-thrash ensembles. They resided in Edinburgh, bonnie Scotland, pretty much the same time that I did. Never being a fan of the fast, hoarse thrash stuff, I never paid much attention to them, though they seemed like nice folks, were down for all the right causes of the time (animal rights, peace, and suchlike), played benefits for striking miners, and even released records on the same label as my band (and no, I'm not jealous 'cos COR Records much preferred them to my band!). Hence, it's always a little strange to revisit such collections. It seems to be an everything-we-ever-done-type effort, so the plenary fans will be excited with the demo tracks and live material. They all still sound fairly horrible to my ears. The studio material does progress quite nicely from the proto-DISCHARGE thrash to more ANTISECT-style riffage with some suitably METALLICA into fancy quiet bits. I like those. And unlike many of our contemporaries, the guitarist/main dude who put this together seems to have retained his ideals. This double-CD set (plus a bonus DVD of various live bands at one of the free festivals that used to happen in Edinburgh in the late '80s) is suitably cheap, well packaged with lyrics and photos, and still a benefit for animal rights and environmental causes. To be honest, I would have loved more liner notes, but this will deservedly excite fans of the genre and anarcho-punk encyclopedics. (RK)
(self-released)

AURYN / FILTH MATTRESS – split EP

AURYN plays a straightforward, melodic style of punk fused with an interesting metal flair à la 3 INCHES OF BLOOD. I figure if Kent McClard were still putting out records, this'd be on Ebullition. Good song. FILTH MATTRESS share AURYN's interest in the more traditional metal nuances, yet counter their partners' sound with a much dirtier and angrier one. These are good songs too, but this is going to be the only time I listen to this record. (RM)
(Square of Opposition)



AUTONOMADIC – "Gift of the Sun" CD

A Seattle trio that sounds like RANCID, SOCIAL DISTORTION, and SWINGIN' UTTERS. The songs get a little goofy at times and the playing is basic. Although not nearly on the level of the mentioned bands, this is a fun and likeable 20-track disc. (RL)
(Bleeding Ear)

A WAR AGAINST SOUND / SENSE OF URGENCY / STAND OUT RIOT – split CD

This is a three-way split CD featuring all British ska-punk bands. SENSE OF URGENCY plays crazy, brain-melting, super fast ska-punk. It's a bit overwhelming, really. They are like a combination of LEFTOVER CRACK and LA PLEBE. If you're secretly (or not so secretly) a CHOKING VICTIM fan, you will dig these guys. STAND OUT RIOT also plays fast Ska-punk, but ska is definitely capitalized in that description. They're way more typical and do a lot of the standard ska stuff. A WAR AGAINST SOUND sounds like a ska version of late-'90s-era NOFX. And who said ska was dead?!? (FS)
(TNS)

THE BASTARD NOISE / THE ENDLESS BLOCKADE – "The Red List" CD

Even though it's listed as BASTARD NOISE, it is, for all intents and purposes, the beloved MAN IS THE BASTARD. Here is the first non-noise Eric Wood material I've heard in many years, and I'm excited as hell. MITB will always be, in my humble eyes, one of the absolute greats, and these tracks are excellent, filling the void left on that fateful day, December 7, 1997, when they, MITB, called it quits. Five tracks are offered from the band featuring Wood, Nelson, and Walker (of PHOBIA). My only complaint is in the drumming; it sounds like the drummer was too closely playing the style and fills of Connell, MITB's drummer. Then again, if he played differently or with more personality, I'd probably complain that "it doesn't sound right," or something along those lines. So it goes. This is great stuff. *The Red List* was also my introduction to the ENDLESS BLOCKADE. Powerful and heavy. Cool power-violence shit, pretty distinct, good, but I'm sorry guys, I'm still stuck on the BASTARD NOISE tracks. I'll have to check you out later. *Essential!* (VL)
(20 Buck Spin)

BESTHÖVEN / BETON – split EP

Shoot, Fofão is quickly becoming the UNHOLY GRAVE of D-beat with this endless series of split 7"s. While I've found some of the recent BESTHÖVEN releases a bit lackluster, this material is top notch. Total Dis-Cimex worship with two new ones and a ripping DISCLOSE cover ("Crying Children"). With tight D-beats and sloppy leads, you can't go wrong. BETON (from Slovakia) have a very mid-'90s Swedish sound that recalls WARCOLLAPSE and the earlier DRILLER KILLER recordings with a dash of double-bass drumming. The first song is sort of a plodder, but the second one picks up the tempo a bit and rips. This is a solid split and even if you been burned out on BESTHÖVEN lately, I'd suggest picking it up. (AU)
(Dist & Confused)

BIG RATS – "Failures" EP

Holy fuck! BIG RATS deliver a scorching hardcore opus for you fucks! This new EP offers up eight songs of potent USA hardcore—this shit pulls you into the pit, fleshes out your hesitation—you are immersed in real hardcore! Side A pulverizes you with non-stop brutality; you crash through "Failures," "My Struggle," "Interference," and "Nudity." Fuck! This is strong hardcore with a capital "H"!! BIG RATS continue to smash your fragile sensibilities on side B with "Out Cold," "Napalm," "Brick," and "Choke Collar." Yes sir!! This authentic American hardcore will fucking hold your undivided attention from start to finish! The sleeve of this screaming fast slice of hardcore is beautifully silk-screened. To obtain your copy of this ferocious HC record, contact Eddie at: bigratsfl@gmail.com (BR)
(self-released)

BILL COLLECTORS – "Hole in the City/ Gold Medal"

It's slow-paced, garage-y bar rock, mining the vein of CANDY SNATCHERS and their ilk. Done well enough, but that rug is getting exceptionally thin. If you've been to a garage punk show in the past ten to fifteen years, you know exactly what to expect. (IS)
(Collectors)

THE BLACKHEART SAINTS – "Sick in Love" EP

From Petersburg, Virginia, the BLACKHEART SAINTS seem to be a relatively new band and, from what I can tell, this appears to be their debut release… These guys obviously have the chops to turn out some solid rock'n'roll riffage and probably put on a great live show fuelled by lots of beer (or whatever your poison of choice may be?). Not a bad endeavor overall, but nothing groundbreaking here. This falls squarely into the genre of music that bands like the DEVIL DOGS and CANDY SNATCHERS shelled out to the masses years ago… (ML)
(Electric Heart)

BORN LOSER – "Piece of Shit" EP

Immediately, I think of the RAMONES. But of course if I just say that, it doesn't really describe this. This record is basic, distorted, three-chord punk with vocals by two singers that waver between Larry May of the CANDY SNATCHERS and Joey Ramone. Simple songs with dumb lyrics: "I got stabbed in the back, and it hurt / I got stabbed in the back, you fucking jerk". Really dumb lyrics. Plus, for no apparent reason, Sid Vicious is on the cover of this record. At least they live up to their band name. (CK)
(Violent Horror Comedy)

BOSSY – "The Best of Bossy" LP

This is some seriously sweet mid-tempo pop music. The content of the songs has a similar aesthetic to NODZZZ and BEAT HAPPENING, but the sound is exponentially more mature and, thusly, much easier to take seriously. This BOSSY release includes a self-indulgent, if not well done cover of Neil Young's "Hey Hey, My My" (BOSSY has achieved the perfect tone for the bass), which ends up being a self-referencing influence name-drop, as their album is structured identically to Young's *Rust Never Sleeps*. *The Best of Bossy* comes highly recommended as both an exemplary product of the burgeoning post-lo-fi scene, and also as excellent accompaniment to sparkin' a doob and goin' for a walk on the beach. Alone… RIP Jamie Ewing. (HD)
(Wild World)

CHEECH / MILO'S SYNDICATE – split EP

Two Boston-area bands share this EP, both delivering signature East Coast HC that's (in the words of MILO'S SYNDICATE) "hard, heavy, and not very nice." Right off the bat, CHEECH's vocals and tuff-but-catchy riffs reminded me of BLOOD FOR BLOOD, especially given the lyrics to the first track, "Whiskey Strength." The horn section on their other song was unexpected (and had me thinking BOSSTONES?), but guest vocals by Paul Bearer kept things in a little grounded in (hardcore) reality. MILO'S SYNDICATE is similar—maybe a little more NYHC-style, definitely influenced by classic-era SICK OF IT ALL—with both their tunes about fighting and beating people down who apparently deserve it for some reason or another. All four tracks are taken from the bands' respective upcoming albums, which, judging by the quality of material here, will be worth checking out if you're the type of person who goes to hardcore shows to let off some pent-up aggression in the pit. Looks like Boston's back on the map…
(United Riot)

CHILLERTON – "Hollow Lane" EP

CHILLERTON has an arresting sound that avoids the usual three-chord guitar progressions and instead invests energy with minor key

harmonics not unlike early HÜSKER DÜ. The songs are less melodic, but "Ebb and Flow" has just the right mixture of sharp punk and heartfelt lyrics that, frankly, could have been more incisive. All in all, this band wins points for its less typical sound. (SS)
(Kiss of Death)

CHIN UP, MERIWETHER – "Fruition" LP

I really should be the last person to review this record—stylistically it is *way* out of my realm, nor do I have any clue as to the context of which this band exists. So, please bear with me. The first thing that comes to mind is an early Plan-It-X Records type of sound, in that it's essentially angular and poppy punk with hidden olde-tyme-y and country roots that are always kinda there but really poke through the surface every now and then. Imagine a more front-porch-y/folksie FRACTURE, and you'd be in the ballpark. I see the FRACTURE thing especially in the ATOM-hasn't-yet-met-his-'PACKAGE styled vocals that he had in FRACTURE. This is definitely not my thing (but my opinion should mean nothing to you if you're into the style). (JU)
(Rumbletowne)

CHRIS MAINWARING IS DEAD / TOUGH TROUBLES – split 10"

TOUGH TROUBLES contains an ex-member of Australian band SOVIET VALVES, who were amazing. Unfortunately, I can't say the same for TOUGH TROUBLES, at least not on the basis of the one long, boring, dirgy track here. Sorry. On the other side, CHRIS MAINWARING IS DEAD plays quirky hardcore that jerks aggressively between early BLACK FLAG, later FLAG, and VICTIM'S FAMILY. A game of two halves in which neither team managed to find the back of the net, I'm afraid. (AM)
(Geneva Lake)

CITIZEN'S PATROL – "Start the Slaughter" EP

This is their first demo from 2006 pressed onto 7" that falls pretty squarely into the No Way/Grave Mistake camp (probably most similar to CHRONIC SEIZURE or LIFE TRAP). Given that they have two middle-of-the-road 7"s already released, neither of which were huge departures from these songs, I'm puzzled as to why this earlier demo was worth pressing onto vinyl three years later. (DG)
(Way Back When)

CLOAK/DAGGER – "Don't Need A" EP

Now that the garage heads are listening to fucking *shoegaze*, the punks can have it back. This band is always on-point—blazing hardcore garage (is that a new genre?) not unlike HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE or the wonderful SHITTY LIMITS, like taking some of the tired mid-'90s schlock and turning up the heat. Totally feeling this one. (TB)
(Grave Mistake)

CONCEPCIÓN GLORY BOYS – "Hacia el Este" LP

CONCEPCIÓN GLORY BOYS are a power-pop/mod trio from the neighborhood of La Concepción in Madrid, Spain, hence the name. They sing in Spanish, so it's hard for me to get a firm grasp on this band, but with influences listed as COCK SPARRER, the STRANGLERS, BUZZCOCKS, the WHO, and the SMALL FACES (to name a few), the music transcends the language barrier—this is good straightforward rock'n'roll with catchy hooks galore! And even though I can't understand a word of it, I can recognize a killer Spanish version of "Cranked Up Really High" by SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS (called "Gatos En Madrid") as the finale on this album! (ML)
(Hillside Strangler / Bowery)

CRAPPY DRACULA – "Almost" LP

It's too bad that the name of the band, the album cover, and the lyrics are "intentionally stupid, silly, and obnoxious" (to quote the band directly) because aside from the silly, stupid, and obnoxious lyrics and aesthetic, the music is pretty good. The guitar has a nice sound to it and the singer(s) has a decent voice. Silly lyrics usually are not actually very funny and in most cases lose any sense of amusement after the first listen, but in the case of CRAPPY DRACULA, the silly lyrics lack even an ounce of amusement on first listen. The vocals are not overpoweringly clear, so had the band not printed the lyrics on the insert, one might even be able to listen to this record ignorant of the lyrics and enjoy it. (MU)
(Crappy Dracula Headquarters)

CUTE LEPERS – "Smart Accessories" CD

What else does one have to say about the CUTE LEPERS other than "fucking brilliant"?!! Damn, but I am a sucker for pop sensibilities and hooks, and Nix, Kicks, and company have included them in abundance throughout this entire album. When I first listened to *Smart Accessories*, I thought that it fell short of their amazing *Can't Stand Modern Music* debut and that maybe they were falling victim to the sophomore slump/hangover that quite often follows such an incredible debut... However I'm happy to say that after repeatedly listening to this, I am now finding myself unable to stop!! Some of these songs were already familiar to me as they had been released on a few singles or comps and every damn one of these songs is a hit waiting to happen! Personal favorites are the title track "Smart Accessories," the slow-building and melodic "Bob Forrest Song," and of course the amazing upbeat "Young Hearts." Hell, it's hard *not* to like any of these songs!! At times, this album reminds me of seminal bands from the late '70s like the SAINTS or the ONLY ONES. Like I said already: fucking brilliant! (ML)
(1-2-3-4 Go!)

CUTE LEPERS – "You Don't Have to Belong to the Religious Right/Any Danger Love"

The new power-pop-soaked single from Steve E Nix (ex-BRIEFS) and cohorts. Their LP from last year was jam-packed with catchy numbers, and this teaser for their upcoming second album will whet your appetite for more. I have to say I prefer the B-side, but that's just the kinda guy I am. If you're a fan of the BRIEFS, any number of wimpy late-'70s power-pop acts, or femme back-up vocals, this is right up your street. (AM)
(1-2-3-4 Go!)

DAN PADILLA – "A Collection Not Perfection" LP

I was hoping this was a new full-length, but alas, it's

not. It is, however, a collection of songs from various splits and an out-of-print tour-only CD, plus a bonus instrumental you've never heard unless you're the guy who recorded it. If you missed any of their split EPs the first time around, now is your chance to get those songs you've been dying (or maybe just curious) to hear. If you've never heard these guys before, imagine poppy tunes with a slight country twang here and there, then absolutely fucking drowned in beer to no end. Makes me want to go to the corner and get a couple tallboys to help me finish these reviews. (BD)
(Little Deputy)

DAYLIGHT – "Sinking" CD

Contrary to popular belief around here, I'm actually not *only* into D-beat and Japanese hardcore. I like DISCOUNT and JAWBREAKER is OK. I even went to the LIFETIME reunion show! But this...this I hate. I can only assume the included one-sheet pissed someone off enough that they slipped this crap into my box for review. I find it particularly amusing that said one-sheet refers to this band's "musical ambition" since this is just an Nth generation HOT WATER MUSIC rip-off. Bleh. Do people really still listen to bands like this? (AU)
(Get This Right)

DEATH WITH A DAGGER – "Dark Alleys" LP

DEATH WITH A DAGGER has no myth, no mystery; nothing is hidden here. I suppose this is, paradoxically, a strength of the record—no one could mistake this for anything other than what it is. This slab of metal-punk is very much a case of "what you see is what you get." Chaney of INEPSY did the cover art, thereby connecting DEATH WITH A DAGGER aesthetically with the aforementioned vanguards of the genre. In spite of their faithfulness to the hallmarks of the style, I'd be hard-pressed to say the band makes an impression like INEPSY. *Dark Alleys* contains all the necessary ingredients and DEATH WITH A DAGGER follows the recipe, even incorporating some memorable (and distinctive) nods to DIO along the way (viz. "Waiting"). The songs are pretty catchy, well produced tunes with leads that reflect a love for JUDAS PRIEST, THIN LIZZY, and IRON MAIDEN. And the inspiration of ANTI-CIMEX, DEATH SIDE, etc. can be heard. The lyrics cover ODs, turning up the volume, and drinking in dark alleys of the city. All this results in a pretty standard fare that doesn't dig too deep. (DB)
(Deaf Forever)

DELAY – "Plain Language" LP

Catchy pop-punk from this Ohio three-piece that's made up of twin brothers and a guy with a beard. Sounds a little like a rough SMOKING POPES, but at the same time you could say it sounds like...say, the COPYRIGHTS, so we're talking Illinois pop-punk here regardless. It's very bouncy, harmonious, and energetic, and charming in a self-depreciating kinda way. I can also hear a resemblance to WESTON here, which is a good thing in my book. Good stuff! (AD)
(Salinas)

DERBY DOLLS / LIBERTY MADNESS – split EP

What kind of lousy-no-good record label puts their MySpace URL on the spindle art twice? Once on each side of the record? Yikes—not starting out good. Throw down the needle on the DERBY DOLLS side and it kind of starts off real bar-rock-ish, but gets better. They have a DONNAS thing going on. Well, an early-'00s DONNAS thing. You know: post-bratty-punk-era, but pre-MOTLEY CRÜE-era. There is kind of a DISTILLERS influence as well. It's not bad. LIBERTY MADNESS plays a late-era DESCENDENTS type of punk, but the really fast kind of songs they played; think of that song "Kids." You know: "Fill me up, I need some Krappers to wash it down / Kids on coffee, kids on coffee!" Man, I love that song. (FS)
(That Lux Good)

THE DESTRUCTORS / SICK ON THE BUS – "Tormentum Insomniae" split CD

UK punk split featuring fellows who have all been at this game for a long, long time. SICK ON THE BUS offers up three songs of DISCHARGE/GBH hybrid hardcore, leaning heavily on the cock-rock aspects of the later incarnations of both of those bands. Even the driving drums can't overshadow the banal lyrics to "Slut" and "Whores Not Wars," which would be simply embarrassing if they weren't so fucking stupid. A shame too, 'cause otherwise these tracks are great...sigh, I would think they might be old enough to know better. The DESTRUCTORS are more mid-tempo UK punk that would perhaps be better suited to a less "slick" production—it sounds like CONFLICT stepped into AC/DC's studio and it takes a little getting used to, but their three songs are politically charged fist-banging punk rock. My only complaint is that it's a little slow. (WN)
(Rowdy Farrago)

DETOURNEMENT – "Awaken with Millions from One Heart" EP

Three tracks of high-energy old school hardcore that's made all the better by a pro-left, class war lyrical stance. Hard-hitting without losing any of its sing-along appeal with a truckload of those fist-in-the-air moments that make this style of punk rock what it is. DILLINGER FOUR meets SLAPSHOT meets early AMERICAN STEEL. (SD)
(Pirates Press)

DETRIOT 442 / FUNERAL MARCH – split EP

First up, we have two tracks straight from Detroit Rock City. Coming from part the DAMNED, a touch of the FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS and, funny enough, a bit of the ol' UK SUBS. It's frantic, energetic, and as punk as a bag of glue—throwing more attitude than a gorilla with a machete. Up next, with another two on the doors, is Germany's FUNERAL MARCH, banging out a pair of dark punk tracks that have a MISFITS menace mixed with a WIPERS foreboding. It's straight-up ol' school punk done with flare and a keen ear for the hooks. Great stuff from both bands; I want to hear more. (SD)
(Detroit Noise)

DEZERTER – "Historia" 2LP

God, this band is *sooo* good. Heavy, original, tuneful, heartfelt, totally powerful. They helped to define the Polish hardcore sound, influencing POST-REGIMENT and ARMIA, not to mention many other bands around the world we've come to know and love! This double-LP, originally released in 1993 on cassette/CD format, contains their earliest recordings as SS-20, rare live recordings, demos from 1982-1985, and the classic 1993 EP. The really dynamic and well-written songs sometimes incorporate elements of new wave and post-punk, yet maintain a hardcore punk foundation almost throughout. Often (particularly on their early/mid-period material), this post-punk/hardcore fusion brings a band like the PROLETARIAT to mind (if they had a fatter sound). Sparingly anthemic, consistently tight and bass-heavy, their sound is an all-time favorite in the history of the genre. (DB)
(Pasazer)

DIRTY FILTHY MUGS – "Another Round/ Stop Thinking & Drink"

A skinhead band that sings anthems about drinking and hanging out with the lads? Who would've thought? Even if a bit predictable, the tune "Another Round" is catchy as hell, with infectious gruff vocals backed by a top-notch rhythm section. The flipside, "Stop Thinking & Drink," is nicely executed POGUES/DROPKICK MURPHYS worship—an influence that is apparent in many of their songs. This single is sort of unnecessary, though, since "Stop Thinking" is on another EP, and "Another Round" is going to be on the upcoming LP. You might want to hold out for that instead. (BG)
(DC-Jamm / Brrapp)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIAS – "We Barely Just Got Here" CD

This was a very unappealing review for me. To start, the packaging is terrible. These guys took a very bland approach to album art, leaving nothing to be inferred or to provoke interest. Next, I find out it's dudes from LAGWAGON holed up in Fresno, CA birthing their newest brainchild all the way into my review box, blahhh. To top it off, the listening experience is the equivalent of tricking LAGWAGON into thinking they can play post-punk/bar rock. They even get serious about the matter by cranking the reverb on vocals and throwing in actual guitar chords between the muted riffs that comprise each and every song! No fun. (RM)
(In Ya Face)

DRUID PERFUME – "Other Worlds/Weird Wally Wigwam"

Michigan's DRUID PERFUME has a few releases out, but this is the only thing I've heard and I dig it. Chaotic rock with a saxophone makes it hard to not call this no wave, but these dudes aren't aping the early NYC scene and, like the name of the A-side, are marching to a different beat on some other world. The mess of a song is actually catchy too—I've got the angular rhythm stuck in my head. This single is already out of print but if you stumble upon it, pick it up. (MU)
(M'Lady's)

EXTORTION / JED WHITEY – split EP

This EP comes to us from *MRR* contributor DX and his zine *Distort* via the land way Down Under; that geographical location might just be the only thing that these two bands have in common (taking it even further, both bands originally hail from Perth, the single most isolated city in the fuckin' world). JED WHITEY achieved the most notoriety stateside with a CAREER SUICIDE split LP from a few years back, but those tracks pale in comparison to these three burners. The band was built and streamlined for the bar scene, like a birthday party and Halloween wrapped up and served with a beer and a shot for fans of ZEKE and MOTÖRHEAD who still also like punk...shit jams. EXTORTION has gotten people's panties in a bunch with full-speed-don't-need (any bullshit) approach to third- (fourth? fifth? shit, what day is it? how many waves??) wave power-violence attack, but these tracks will fucking blow minds. Some of the first songs EXTORTION ever recorded, they are ultra rough and even delightfully warbling at times... This is exactly how this music was meant to be listened to—raw and shitty—and it hurts. Awesome split, awesome zine, awesome bands. (WN)
(Distort)

THE EYES – "TAQN" 10"

Finally, a legitimate reissue of one of the quintessential LA punk records—maybe one of the greatest 45s ever? This is a 10" (yes, you read that correctly) but the extra songs are all from the Dangerhouse sessions that produced the *TAQN* 7" and the *Yes LA* comp, and there are some tasty unreleased songs, too. No bullshit filler live tracks or substandard demos! I've heard that the EYES were inspired by WIRE, which kind of makes sense, even though musically they seem so disparate. WIRE comes off as so constrained and knowing, while the EYES definitely have that awareness/smartness to their band idea and songwriting; they are so much trashier in execution and style, and as a result, dare I say, more fun. Not an ounce of pretention here. The lyrics are great—so smart and incisive and witty—and the music's so catchy it's ridiculous. That organ sound! Joe Joe Ramirez's vocals! It's sort of like something you could imagine playing in a '60s beach party movie or in a seedy basement. The lyrics recontextualize the California ideal and the lack of self-awareness that was rife in the late-'70s hippie cocaine--and-cowboy-boots crash that punk rendered meaningless with its mere existence. This record has been a top want, as they say, for a *looong* time, and finally having these songs in vinyl form, with bonuses, is like it's my birthday everyday. (LG)
(Artifix)

FAD – "Kill Punk Rock Stars" CD

More proof of the immense influence AGAINST ME! has had on melodic punk of the last decade. The FAD plays Fat Records-style pop-punk with frequent ska parts and the occasional hardcore breakdown. Totally the kind of band I would expect to "get signed" (as they say in the biz); a very marketable sound. But, my hat does go off to these guys for claiming to be from "Bong Island, New York." Hilarious. (FS)
(Bankshot)

FAILURES – "I'm Busy" EP

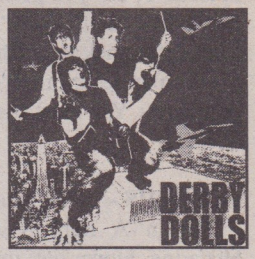
I hate to play this card, but FAILURES sounds like what I'd expect from those who did time in DAS OATH and CUT THE SHIT, though things are obviously built upon in this band. Raging, frantic hardcore with a sound that's big and blown out at the same time, while having intricate, innovative riffing and a fleeting feeling to everything because there's not a lot that repeats itself. If there were, these songs could be considered anthemic, but they're not and are better off for it. This is a little more raw and every bit as good as last year's LP, but neither does their live show justice. (DG)
(Painkiller)

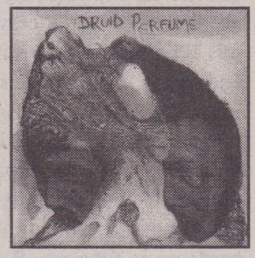
THE FAILURES – "Working Class Blues" CD

It's ska-punk that is under-produced with keyboards but no horns. From SoCal, this wants to be OPERATION IVY. This is OK, but that's about it. Beware of the butchering of BILLY BRAGG's "Between the Wars." (RL)
(self-released)

FIX ME – "Ni Una Sola Puta Lágrima" LP

With former members of E-150, this is HC done right. Heavy and mean and fast and angry, and I'm enjoying every second of it. Sounds like a modern version of POISON IDEA's *Kings of Punk* LP. Riffs are catchy and done well, and the guitarist is wearing a REPLACEMENTS *Stink* t-shirt on the insert—definite top ten material! The country of Spain is really delivering the goods right now. (VL)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)





FLESHIES – "Brown Flag" LP

This album, like everything FLESHIES have done, is undeniably good. But if you're looking for more of the same from the folks who brought you *Kill the Dreamer's Dream*, you may be disappointed. This album is a definite departure from their earlier material. To be blunt; this is a total *pop* album through and through. It stands to reason that it's on Recess Records instead of Alternative Tentacles, like their last three albums. You will find some faster songs that are reminiscent of "Naked and Bleeding"-era FLESHIES, but they are few and far between. This is totally a new direction for the band, but solely based on its own merits, this is a good album. The songwriting is still really exciting and fresh; each track has good hooks and is totally danceable. Well, except for "Finger in the Sky"—yikes, not a fan of that song. It's totally the Jar-Jar Binks of this album. Not that this is album is equitable to *Episode 1*, but you get the metaphor. Oh, and the 50 MILLION-style "You Can Be a Star" is a beautiful track to finish up the album. This is a killer pop record from one of the Bay Area's best bands. You must check it out. (FS)
(Recess)

FOLKEIIS – "Hell Kaaos Night" EP

Fuckin'-A right. Five tracks of ripping, blistering, blown-out, thundering '80s Finnish hardcore worship à la Japan. Brings to mind POIKKEUS or LAUKAUS and is one of the best 7"s of last year. Highly recommended. (RR)
(Answer)

FORCE FED – "Turn Your Amp" EP

Within seconds of hearing this, I knew it was going to fucking rule. FORCE FED is '88-style hardcore purity, with rapid drum blasts, ferocious and fast power-chords, and an awesome singer who can belt 'em out with conviction and intensity. I love that there are absolutely no youth crew shouted choruses on this because that crap still gives '88 hardcore a bad rep in most people's minds. The cool shit, like STRAIGHT AHEAD and OUTBURST (among others) rarely, if ever, relied on that nonsense. And this band plays that style faultlessly, with sincerity and definitely without sounding like some lame retro band. Pure hardcore is timeless. Be sure to grab this EP. (BG)
(Painkiller)

THE FRESH & ONLYS – "Second One to Know/Hated or Loved"

Little originality and no balls to make up for that fact—there is no reason why two tracks that were already released for a limited FRESH & ONLYS cassette on Woodsist-side-tape-label Fuck It Tapes should be stamped and compressed to bore our eardrums to the point of pulling out monotonous *Summer of Love* Time-Life comps. It's competent enough—there is no denying that fact—however, lost somewhere in the simply layered jingle-jangle is a sense of effort or sincerity, and I guess since these are just re-released tracks, we shouldn't be expecting anything anyhow. (AL)
(Woodsist)

THE GAGGERS – "Fix Me Up" EP

This is the debut from these English fellows and I've got news for you: it rocks. It's melodic but also very lo-fi, which is a great combo as far as I'm concerned. It's sort of classic-punk-sounding, with just a hint of garage. It's also got those sort of "look at me, I'm a fucking snot" vocals. It really reminds me of the early punk lo-fi stuff, like the SWELL MAPS and O-LEVEL. This is good shit and leaves me hoping to hear more from these cats. (KK)
(Rapid Pulse / No Front Teeth)

GATECRASHERS – "Rock'n'Roll Suicide" CD

The band is bad hair-metal/glam from Norway. It ain't LA 1988, dudes. There's a little TURBONEGRO in the mix too. Try *Kerrang* next time, posers. (RL)
(self-released)

THE GONADS – "Glorious Bastards" LP

I hate reviews that waste time telling stories, but please bear with me: Last weekend we had my wife's cousin over for dinner and beers. The food was great, and as the beers flowed I took it upon myself to start playing some killer tunes. We listened to EA80, CIRCLE JERKS, the WEDDING PRESENT, MCH BAND (we are a very diverse household), and the CLASH. Then I decided that no one would notice if I started checking out this month's review material. Now please bear in mind that the wife's cousin is way into techno, break beat, deep house, and loads of other shit that I think is complete shit—but whatever, 'cause it's not my world and he's a super nice dude… The cousin pipes up after about three tracks: "What the fuck are we listening to? It sounds like a horrible attempt by a commercial radio band to try to create something punk…can you please turn it off?" Later, at MRR HQ, I asked Bruce, and he confirmed that this is indeed the band that made a split LP with the BLOOD back in the 19somethings, but goddamn this shit sounds so fucking tired now. This is mediocre Oi! at best. (WN)
(Longshot Music)

THE GRANDE MACHINE – CD

This band has taken the lower-common-denominator DEAD BOYS or HEARTBREAKERS-styled riffs and dressed them up as catchy pop tunes that are undeniably neutered, though the roots are still apparent. Objectively speaking, these songs are well written. This is the kind of thing I can only take in very small doses, but it's not bad for what it is. Maybe I'll listen to this a couple more times before throwing it in the free bin. (DG)
(Zero Budget)

GUILT TRIP! – "Outrageous Claims" LP

A few years back, a lot of my friends went apeshit over DEAD NATION and TEAR IT UP. I never really got the hype myself—they sounded like watered-down versions of better hardcore bands from ten or twenty years prior to me. Neither of those bands was bad by any means, but I still don't think they were really anything that special. I'm sure a lot of those same friends will love GUILT TRIP!—it's mostly in the same vein of mid-to-fast-tempo hardcore with pronounced youth crew and thrash influences (with a bit more of a modern hardcore sound at times), and it features members of the aforementioned bands to boot. And it still leaves me cold. (VX)
(Absent)

THE HADDONFIELDS – "We Are Not Alone" CD

I'm two tracks in and I'm claiming this as this month's winner. It's pop-punk but not, because its balls are just way too big. It's almost-pop-punk like the LILLINGTONS were almost-pop-punk. (Is this record even better than the first LILLINGTONS LP? The debate will rage on.) It's got that sci-fi twist whilst taking in some of the Texan vibe of the HEX DISPENSERS, and packing enough woah-woah-woahs to put NAKED RAYGUN to shame. Packed to the rafters with instant-classic hooks and an unstoppable drive, this is not going to leave my stereo for a year. With a song title "So I Ain't a Racist or Nothing, But Some Aliens Are Martians," how could you possibly go wrong? Ten outta ten, two thumbs up, and a big hug all the way from SF. (SD)
(I Hate Punk Rock)

HAM AND THE CHOKERS – "Goin' Down" EP

We have tough rock from Oakland with some TURBONEGRO-esque undertones, especially with the out-of-nowhere hotlicks. They have the sound down and the lyrics are appropriately loaded with "motherfuckers," "huhs!" and that sorta thing, but it all comes off…unconvincing. Maybe it's just the recording. Then again, on "Desperation," the all-out guitar-peddle blizzard just gives 'em a generic Oakland-tough-dude-band sound that isn't as obvious on some of the other songs. Get these dudes a decent recording and they could sound as menacing as they obviously

want to be. And that's not a dis, but a request. And maybe it's happened, since this was recorded back in '08. Killer cover artwork. (IS)
(Rich Bitch)

HAMMERED GRUNTS / RUM REBELLION – "Pick Yer Poison" CD

Six tracks apiece from these, er, "pirate-friendly" Portland bands, including a cover each of the other band's song—both of which (original and cover) are included here. Rather cool, actually. RUM REBELLION has that folk-punk thingy down real good; acoustic (and electric) guitar, tin whistle, mandolin, etc. Fortunately, they don't claim to be Irish, so no weird/phony accents, just some rollickingly good punkified reels and jigs in there with the melodic punk. Somewhat akin to the best of the REAL MACKENZIES if you switched out the bagpipes for a mandolin. HAMMERED GRUNTS play a much more straight-ahead, driving punk/thrash with shouted vocals. Their RUM REBELLION cover has some fantastic lead guitar work. Well worth walking the plank for. (RK)
(Rodent Popsicle / Pyrate Punx)

HANNA HIRSCH – "Tala Svart" LP

I remember this Swedish group from their split EP with YOUNG FIT MALES a year or two ago. Actually, *Tala Svart* was originally released on CD in late 2008, so the two were probably recorded around the same time. Whatever the case, the band delivers a solid album here; something about their sound reminds me of classic punk bands like the FASTBACKS or ASTA KASK that weren't afraid to play straight-up pop with vocal-driven melodies—though HANNA HIRSCH has much less of a buzzsaw guitar sound and more of a melancholy edge than either of the aforementioned. It's got an almost LEATHERFACE-like wistfulness… OK, I just name-checked three legendary bands here; HANNA HIRSCH isn't quite on that level yet. One criticism I'd make is that some of the material lacks distinctiveness and begins to sound too similar over the course of a full LP. That's not the case though with the last song on side A—a sparse pop tune comprised solely of vocals and keys that wouldn't be out of place on the soundtrack to a Wes Anderson movie. Overall, this is a cool LP, from the layout and artwork to the tunes within. I can see the band appealing to both the current-day pop-punk scene as well as fans of GORILLA ANGREB, KNUGEN FALLER, and the like. (CS)
(Adagio830)

THE HIDDEN DANGERS – "Release the Hounds" CD

Straight-up rock'n'roll down with a healthy wink and a nod to the hair-metal days of MOTLEY CRÜE, FASTER PUSSY CAT, and a slew of others. Played well, played tight, and wearing its influences proud and loud. If it's a no-frills, no-spills trip down rock'n'roll memory lane you want, then you'll dig this. (SD)
(self-released)

HIGHLIFE – "Self Abuse" EP

Fast, wild, negative hardcore *screeeeeeamed* through at light-speed party mode. Not enough personality for me to really dig this release, but I'm sure this is the cat's meow for some stoned skater out there. (RM)
(Cowabunga)

HITLER SS / TAMPAX – split EP

There is no argument, there can be no contention: This is the most punk record ever made. The funniest record ever made. The best sounding record ever made. The greatest record ever made. Hyperbole nothing. A mutual drummer and a shared sense of true dumb-smarts connect these two Italian teen groups, who managed to record and release the (I repeat) greatest record ever made in a mere fifteen minutes. "Killed By Death," eat my shit. (BB)
(bootleg)

HOLY SOCKETS / SUNDOWNERS – split EP

SUNDOWNERS play rough-around-the-edges, mid-tempo Midwest melodic punk with abundant gear changes and, seemingly, a noise influence…like something between Amphetamine Reptile and No Idea Records. HOLY SOCKETS are more of the same, though even looser, rougher, and more lo-fi. (AD)
(Anti-Civ)

THE HORRIBLY WRONG – "C'mon and Bleed with the Horribly Wrong" LP

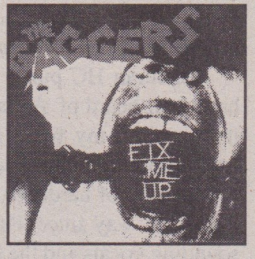
Catchy yet blown-out, Pabst-soaked garage punk from Bloomington, Indiana. Fuck, I wish these dudes had been around when I lived there. The songs are short and snotty, taking as much from (early) SCREECHING WEASEL as the OBLIVIANS. It's a combination that works. Rather than just trying to come off as a bunch of tough-ass garage punks (ha, right), these guys sound like they know how to have a good time. The release is limited to 500 copies. Silk-screened covers, 100 on red vinyl. (IS)
(Eradicator / Shit in Can)

HYGEINE – "Town Centre" EP

I liked their last 7", and I like this one too. It's bleak post-punk from the UK that brings to mind new towns, job centers, pub closing time, a band dissecting the tyranny and mundanity of modern concrete life with sneering humor. People have referenced TYVEK and the TELEVISION PERSONALITIES when talking about this band, and while I see the references (it would be hard not to), I think HYGEINE has a darker, almost aggro fuck-you quality to their sound. The guitars are much more aggressive-sounding that anything I have heard from TYVEK, and though the two have a similar *Messthetics* appeal, TYVEK sounds pastoral next to this noise. "City Centre" is the jam, a veering drunken trudge down the top-floor corridor on the night bus at 3:00 A.M. "Dissertation" is also awesome—repetitive and creepy in a way that somehow reminds me of *Metal Box*-era PiL and the first BUZZCOCKS 7", but made by kids who probably own CRO-MAGS records. This is a great record and should be available in larger quantities than their first one, of which they rather ridiculously only made 100. (LG)
(Static Shock)

ICE AGE – "Hole" EP

Who doesn't love bands comprised of all teens? I had a now-over-the-hill friend tell me that, as a young punk, he wouldn't let a 22-year-old fogey into his high school band because that dude was too old and therefore lame. Good rule. Denmark's ICE AGE has the right idea, too—no



one older than 18 is in the group. And it works for them. The young Danes, who according to their MySpace page were formerly known as BORN TO FUCK, have released an EP that races unstructured through echo and noise. The self-titled record's four songs ironically all pull together as a cohesive unit, because singularly they almost fall apart completely, only to be held together by some loose beats and catchy melodies. No one is young forever, so it's good these kids are making music now before they're over the hill. (AL)
(Escho)

I HATE THIS – "Lost" EP

This 7" compiles I HATE THIS's two split releases on one record. It's the kind of reissue I can get behind. The split with RAW SEWAGE is the best material, but the other one's not bad. These kids play fast, straightforward HC with well-done lyrics touching on herbalism, sexual assault, the late Kurt Vonnegut, and being shit on in high school, among other topics. I'm not losing my shit over this, but it's a quality record. (JM)
(Sit and Spin / Give Praise)

IN-SANE – "Trust These Hands...Are Worthless" CD

The second full-length, I believe, from these Slovenian rockers. Other than my perennial surprise at non-natives singing/speaking/writing English considerably better than most of the, er, indigenous punkers, this is a polished "modern" hardcore effort. They mix up *Today's Empire, Tomorrows Ashes*-era PROPAGANDHI with some early RANDY and the metallic hardcore stylings of STRUNG OUT. Not a bad mélange at all, and I'm always a sucker for them false harmonics. Lots of angst pours through à la HOT WATER MUSIC, with a large dose of emo amongst the ant-sexist/racist/homophobic lyrical fare. (RK)
(Moonlee)

KESE MUERAN – "Solo Mentiras" EP

Honduran HC punk! This is the first that I have ever heard of. A crazy bass-line that drills its way into my brain instantly punishes my ears. Insane sounding, definitely for fans of the noisier side of hardcore punk shit. Four tracks that I am way into! The vocalist has pissed-sounding vocals and the lyrics are about disgust and anger towards fascists and everyday crap one has to deal with. The drums pound through this disc accompanied by vicious guitar sounds. Now for background info, or lack thereof. This record was post-marked from Honduras along with a letter that said the band formed in a clandestine manner to avoid oppression there due to the recent political climate and shifting of power in that country (US-imposed, of course). Here is the weird part; the record comes off as a boot cuz all matrixes are carved out. No other info was provided. Strange but cool as fuck. Get one if you can. (MS)
(no info)

KIMONO DRAGGIN' – "Space Orphans" CD

Klever name, folks. *Not!* I like the idea of "Space Orphans," they can be characters in my movie, *Space Ghetto*. Right off the bat I find fault in the super obvs "I'm a spaceman"-intro title: "Duality Jones." Astronaut Jones from *SNL*, anyone? This record is weird—in a weird way, not in a far-out groovy way. I really expected a MAN OR ASTROMAN sorta thing outta this based on the intro and the photos of the band wearing tin-foil, but nope...imagine if SCRATCH ACID was really bad and there was a cover band of that really bad SCRATCH ACID band with a penchant for show tunes and their sense of humor was the most defining trait. Yuk. (JU)
(Spaynsive)

KING AUTOMATIC – "From Commercial Road to Elstree/Closing Time"

One-man band that takes a novel approach to the niche genre—the songs actually have some fucking depth. The A-side comes off like a moody MILKSHAKES (or MASONICS) number while the flipside keeps the same kind of Medway sound going but is a simple yet killer stomper. (IS)
(Slovenly)

KOWLOON WALLED CITY – "Gambling on the Richter Scale" CD

I put this on and I'm pretty sure these dudes practice down the hall from me at a rat-infested shithole in the Tenderloin. I recognize the rumble almost immediately and the ultra low guitars seal the deal—it's the same dudes. KOWLOON WALLED CITY is arguably not suited for the pages of this magazine, sounding way more in line with newer "heavy" music than with punk, but rules be damned because the shit rules. Churning mid-paced riffs that fall in line with KYLESA, down-tuned guitar single-string picking that falls even more in line with KYLESA, and vocals that remind me of BLESSING THE HOGS, another San Francisco low-end juggernaut from a few years ago. I have little doubt that this band will be huge and I kinda figure that's the goal here, but while I can still go see 'em for $5, I'd better take advantage. (WN)
(The Perpetual Motion Machine)

THE LAYBACKS – LP

This is the first full-length released by this Lapland, Finnish band. I dig fast, I dig songs about beer, but I dig the cover art of this LP (a cartoonier version of Nick Blinko; it's pretty sweet) more than the record itself. The music simple and catchy, like a slightly rougher version of RANCID. The guitars are grittier, but it's still a touch too over-produced. I wouldn't listen to this at home, but if I were drunk at a house party, this would be the feel-good punk band of the night, inducing more beer-spill, arm-in-arm dancing than slamming. This album is mostly RANCID with some tiny hints of NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS and JAWBRAKER slathered in street punk, but not as good as any of those mentioned. The songs are sung in English, the lyrics are mainly about looking back on a wasted life and drinking yourself into a hole... I heard that... (MB)
(Roku)

LE FACE – "Death Rattle" 12"

Warbled and echoed fractures of sinister punk repetition are choked out for another release from this Orange County band that already has an LP and a couple singles under their collective bullet belt. Up until this point, LE FACE has had some great songs and some not-as-memorable ones. On their best day, the band plays dramatic, dark post-rock-punk with just enough swagger to make your tail bristle from the attitude dripping off the record—and there is no deficit of that sort of material on this release. The seven songs on this 12" EP are somehow made even more untouchably cool as they're wrapped up in darkly contrasted cover art done by Gitane Demone of CHRISTIAN DEATH. (AL)
(Tic Tac Totally)

LEXOMYL / THE SIOUX – split EP

This is an awesome split 7" of two kick-ass French bands. The SIOUX are totally mind-blowing. They're like a combination of AVENGERS and NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. There are two originals and a cover of "Mystery" by the WIPERS. Solid. LEXOMYL is also pretty fucking remarkable. They play some pretty fast, hard-hitting punk rock with strongly WIPERS-influenced guitar leads. The second song of three has a slightly melodic and pop feel to it, only slightly. The other two tracks are dark, grim and totally epic. One of the best records of the month! (FS)
(self-released)

LOVETAPS – "Love 'Em or Leave 'Em/Goodbye Sunshine"

Poppy/sappy '60s-style fare, on the lo-fi side. The press release calls it "timeless," but to these ears it sounds a little like the more put-together, sentimental BBQ songs, or, if you can dig this, hints of the CLAP (early '70s band). It's decent enough. This band features members of Austin's old-timers club: the INHALANTS, WIRETAPS, TITZ, WHITE HEAT, SATANS, and lotsa other bands. (IS)
(Super Secret)

LOWLIFE UK – "The Hypnotized Never Lie" CD

I hate to be "that guy", but seriously? Is this pixilated piece of shit the best you could do for artwork? I mean, you spend time writing songs and shit, and then wrap it in this garbage? Fuck. This is their sixth album, too!!! It's metallic, meat-and-potatoes hardcore punk, sorta like when the ENGLISH DOGS or GBH went "metal." (TB)
(self-released)

LOW THREAT PROFILE – "Kick My Heart" EP

So I should mention right off the bat that LOW THREAT PROFILE is a project featuring Domino of INFEST handling all the guitars, Bob from LACK OF INTEREST on drums, and Andy of NO COMMENT doing the vocals. I think the ex-members-of thing is used all too often to sell records, but how the fuck could this not be amazing?! This 7" is the kind of ugly, hateful hardcore that can only be produced by those stewing in the sterile soulless jungle in the middle of a fucking desert (AKA Southern California). This isn't hardcore from the streets, or the suburbs, or any place, really—this is hardcore from damaged minds and dead souls. Beast beaters. Spite amplified. Ugly music for uglier times. And if you only buy this for the ex-members-reasons, you better fucking like it or you're a tool of the system. (JU)
(Deep Six / Drawblank)

THE MARKED MEN – "Fix My Brain" LP

The MARKED MEN are currently the best band in the world; you need to own every record they have ever released. If they play your town, county, or country, you need to go see them, even if means locking your kids in a closet. This is their best LP, but that means nothing considering all their LPs are their best LP. Dirtnap has made it easy for you by re-releasing all their stuff, so get your head out of this rag and deeply enhance your life by doing the MARKED MEN load up. I swear it's better than a wank. (SD)
(Dirtnap)

MDC / THE RESTARTS – split CD

OK, yeah, MDC are still fucking playing after nearly 30 fucking years. And you know what? They still fucking kill it. You can actually hear the spit flying out of *MRR* alum Dave Dictor's mouth on "Patriot Asshole" and even though the mid-paced "Quentin" is probably a little too rock'n'roll for most folks, it is absolutely the same million-words-a-minute "yeah, I'm preaching, but you fucking know that I'm right, you self-absorbed asshat!!" approach to hardcore that has made MDC the legacy that they are. Still 100% real and Dave still brings carrots on tour, 'cause he is, you know, healthy and shit. UK's RESTARTS have been around for ages (which sounds silly to say on a split with MDC) and this is more of the same: punk fucking rawk. Good enough to win over the punx, killer wall of punk guitars, but still lowest-common-denominator to appeal to mainstream EXPLOITED punks. Then there are the ska bits that either make you love them more or make you run away, but it's OPERATION IVY ska mixed with UK punk, so it's basically cool with me. This was released for their tour together, a tour I suggest you see if you get the chance...there's over a century of punk history in that one van. Seriously. (WN)
(Crash Assailant / Rodent Popsicle)

THE MEN – "We Are the Men" 12"

Blown-out, distorted, feedback-heavy hard psych with lots of rock'n'roll and punk leanings. This is a four-track 45 rpm 12". "Hated" is a rave-up rocker; "Ailment" is super distorted punk meets heavy psych with an extended guitar jam. I hear a little STOOGES combined with modern hard psych like COMETS ON FIRE. "The Man" didn't turn me on. It's more melodic and the singer tries to sing. Sounds like a poor man's DINOSAUR JR. "Sketchy Pussy" has a distorted surf/spy guitar sound. Multiple mellow breakdowns (in the rock'n'roll sense not the metal/hardcore sense) followed by rave-ups. "How do you make love in the digital age? There's no way"?? OK stuff, but I'd stick to side A. (MH)
(self-released)

MINOR DISTURBANCE – "In the Line of Fire" EP

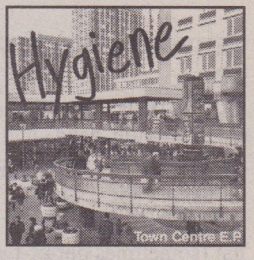
Herky-jerky hardcore punk from Philly. MINOR DISTURBANCE is definitely early-'80s-hardcore-informed, but with some modern touches. They are playing some sloppy and fun hardcore punk. One side is from the perspective of a soldier, and the other relates tales from a "kid" mindset. The song "VFW" ("Veterans of a Fucked-up World") is clearly the hit—I listened to it a few times. Overall, it's pretty generic, but there's a welcome odd quality to MINOR DISTURBANCE. They kind of remind me of FLAG OF DEMOCRACY mixed with a super budget REALLY RED. Decent first effort. (CI)
(Run and Hide)

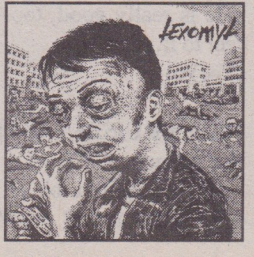
MUTOID MEN – "Mutoid World" LP

OK, it took me a good 50 seconds to realize that this plays at 45 rpm and not 33 rpm. I'm hoping that is not a bad sign. It seems like it's maybe a little too deep for me, with song titles like "Saturn," "Orbit," and "Robot Dreams." The music can be catchy, but I think they've over-complicated things. Things start off sort of mellow, then build up and build up, then explode, then mellow out again and start all over. Some sort of a synthesizer appears out of nowhere. At their best they remind me of RED PLANET, but only because of the vocals. Still, I think there's some humor in that, in a planetary sort of way. Some of the songs actually border on bizarre. Ultimately, I find the whole thing just a little too busy. (KK)
(Rumbletowne)

NAKATOMI PLAZA – "Ghosts" CD

This is the farewell release of a band I don't think I've ever heard of, despite the fact that they'd been going for over ten years by the time they broke up last year. An indie-rock power-trio in the vein of JAWBOX with hints of JETS TO BRAZIL and J CHURCH, they might have gone places if they could have thought of a name beginning with the letter J. As it is, they appear to have languished in the DIY underground for their entire career, despite desperately chasing the major label dream, if the liner notes on this album are to be believed. From the sounds of things, they tried everything they possibly could to get signed, to no avail. While I'm sure there's some truth there, their excuses (that their lack of success was down to music industry or *Alternative Press* prejudice against either their Asian singer, or female bassist, or





political lyrics) come across as sour grapes. Half the time they are going on about how much they love the DIY scene and culture, the other half they're complaining about how they never "made it." Waaah waaah. If you cared about this band and are sad they have broken up, you probably need to get this self-released CD. (Self-released, but they still have a PR guy…) (AM)
(Nakatomi Plaza)

N.A.N.S. – "The Outbreak of War" EP

A strong start on this record. The vocalist sounds a lot like the one from TOMORROW, who were from the same area as this band—possibly the same person on this recording. Six chunky sounding tunes that integrate multiple styles of as hardcore and metal. There are a few breakdowns thrown in here and there. Contemporary sound overall, it just goes a lot of different places and it loses me a bit. (MS)
(Answer)

NERVOUS SYSTEMS – "Needs Medicines" LP

This is the last thing I expect to hear from a Gainesville band, and that's a good thing. Shambolic '80s indie-pop that falls somewhere between the SHOP ASSISTANTS, the WEDDING PRESENT, and the CURE, with flat (sometimes out-of-tune), deadpan English-accented vocals, lush guitars, and dreamy keyboards. If John Peel were still alive, he'd play the hell out of this. So will I. (AM)
(Obscurist Press)

NEW BRUISES / OFFSHORE RADIO – split EP

It comes as absolutely no surprise that NEW BRUISES are from Tampa, Florida. They fit like a glove into the Florida gruff-melodic pop punk scene. Total DUKES OF HILLSBOROUGH/MADISON BLOODBATH-core. In other words, the songs have the tempo of OFF WITH THEIR HEADS while the content has that slightly dude-emo feel to it, usually derived from listening to JAWBREAKER and LEATHERFACE in heavy doses. It's good, but it's what you'd expect. If you like the scene that these guys are a part of, you'll dig their tunes. OFFSHORE RADIO is from the United Kingdom and also plays pop-punk, but the style isn't as easy to pin down. The first song has kind of a POGUES feel it, and no, it's not because of the accent. The second song on this side is really good, too—kind of J CHURCH feel to it. (FS)
(Yo-Yo)

NEW BRUISES / O PIONEERS – "Under the Influence" EP

It took quite a bit of detective work to get what scant info I could on this record. I'm not even clear on who put this out, either Suburban Home or Vinyl Collective. From reading the liner notes, I gather that each band is doing a cover song. O PIONEERS do a PIEBALD song and NEW BRUISES covers SUPERCHUNK—if you're a fan, guess which song? NEW BRUISES is a new band, so I can't really make a decision on them by one cover song. I've never heard O PIONEERS before, nor am I familiar with the song they did. It should be obvious that if you like either band on this record or either band being covered, you'd probably be into this. If not, but you're still curious, check for a review of the NEW BRUISES record also in this issue and go find an O PIONEERS record to give a listen. (BD)
(Vinyl Collective)

NIGHT OWLS – "Fun & Games" EP

There's not a lot of info with this one in regards to where they're from, so I can't tell you much about this band other than they are not quite a straight-up rock'n'roll band. Their music is definitely high-volume with riffin' guitars, driving bass and drums, and raging vocals, but with more of an angst-y style that reminds me of the '90s—maybe sort of like FUGAZI or something like that? (ML)
(Barbarossa)

NOTHING IS OVER – "Negative Fucking Energy" EP

Sometimes bands can't help but wear their influences on their sleeves. NOTHING IS OVER is the kind of band that don't just wear it on their sleeve, they wave a sign in the air, scream "PLUTOCRACY, PLUTOCRACY, PLUTOCRACY!" at you, and then proceed to pummel you about the head and neck with the sign, which also reads "PLUTOCRACY." In other words, they sound a lot like PLUTOCRACY—weed-infused, stop/start, slow/fast stoner-grind with questionable lyrics. They're good, but they're no PLUTOCRACY. Still worth picking up, though, despite the lyric "Your friends [sic] stand between/You and that vagin." Nice rhyme there, dudes. (VX)
(Buddha Khan / Sit & Spin)

THEE OH SEES – "The Master's Bedroom Is Worth Spending a Night In" LP

Reish of the band's 2008 LP, which was like their 500th release or some shit. Dougie swears by these guys and there's no denying that John Dwyer is pretty fucking good at what he does. Sparkling, shimmery '60s psychedelic pop with an almost rockabilly backbone. What really makes this band special are the male/female vocals, which sorta harmonize throughout.... pretty mesmerizing stuff. I saw this band last night and it all made perfect sense. The records are an addition to the live show. Go see them, then double back on the records—they make so much more sense. Fantastic stuff. Multilayered and complex, yet made seemingly simple—pure sonic craftsmanship. (TB)
(In the Red)

OK? – "This Is Only a Test" EP

This band was stirring up a pretty substantial buzz in my world over the couple of weeks leading up to their San Francisco show…and then I get to top it off with a new EP? Consider this fellow stoked. This San Diego band is perhaps the best bit of early '80s UK-anarcho-punk worship produced in the last two decades; they nail the atypical Crass Records style so perfectly that this record defies me to make any other comparisons. "Laissez-Faire" as an A-side is a brilliantly wordy, charging jam, and the flip follows suit…after comparing this to the classics and saying it rules, I am pretty much at a loss. This just rules, get it. (WN)
(Life's a Rape)

THE OPEN CASKET / SCRABBLE ROBOT – split EP

This isn't just a split EP, it's a contest: the OPEN CASKET vs. SCRABBLE ROBOT. OK. Before I even put the needle to the vinyl, I find myself staring at the cover, which has some drawing of what looks like Chucky from that series of horror movies, the name of which I can not remember. Or maybe they were just called Chucky. I have to admit that the OPEN CASKET has me pleasantly surprised. The music is mid-tempo and driving and very catchy. It seems to lack passion, but it's definitely solid. SCRABBLE ROBOT plays a more poppy type of punk rock and reminds me of PEGBOY. They wanted to make it a contest, so I'm declaring SCRABBLE ROBOT. (KK)
(Mortville)

OTAN – "Sociedad Despreciable" EP

I've spent quite a bit of time with OTAN's first EP, and I can't stop listening to this one either. I keep humming the songs on my walks around town, ripping them off when I'm fooling around on my bass—I can't get them out of my head. It's like OTAN has discovered a long-lost secret recipe for writing and recording insanely catchy, concise, and simple hardcore songs. I will always have a place in my record stacks for primitive, raging hardcore punk that retains its unique and engaging qualities, and OTAN simply nails the sound. (CI)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

PEACE OR ANNIHILIATION – "Skull Fucking Armageddon" EP

OK, first thing (and I will almost forgive this trespass since this band is from Jakarta, Indonesia, but…), *you do not record an "intro" for a five-song hardcore 7". It's like 12 minutes long at the most, you make the most*

impact, go for the throat, and don't waste time setting the "mood." That's like being fifteen, having your date over, having twelve minutes before your parents get home, and wasting the time dimming the lights, lighting candles and incense, and putting on the TEDDY PENDERGRASS records. *No—you get down to business, people!!!!* So there's like two minutes of intro for five minutes of music on one side. What the fuck? It's not that it's a *bad* intro or anything, but you save that for the slick metal album down the road. These songs could have even been sequenced closer together to rage harder, one after the next into each other—*maximum impact!!!* That aside, there's plenty of impact from the pretty desperate and raw D-beat hardcore here, with some metallic riffing chucked on top of churning DISCHARGE-by-way-of-Japan-influenced hardcore; crackling on the edges of blown-out, but with a decent balance of noise and clarity, and played with fervor and intensity à la DISCLOSE with more raw screams than hoarse, Cal-style vocals. Though the riffs are given plenty of repetitive space to rumble in, the lyrics are short, DISCHARGE-haiku style, half written in Indonesian and half about the skull fucking armageddon, etc. *D-beat maniacs take note!!!* (KS)
(Shogun)

PETROLEUM BY-PRODUCT – "Superficial Artificial" LP

GARY NUMAN fronting a new wave garage band. That kind of cold detachedness, square waves, disco beats, danceable. Living entirely under the belief of products controlling everything. A tougher, smarter HUMAN LEAGUE. It's all right. (MM)
(Mona, no info)

PETROLEUM BY-PRODUCT – "Superficial Artificial" LP

During the late '70s, bunches of punks stepped away from the guitar/bass/drums attack and added keyboards (shock, horror). Some, like SIOUXSIE and GARY NUMAN, garnered a ton of media attention and promptly disappeared up their own arses in a puff of white face-powder, taking with them all the no-mark imitators. The good shit from the dark synth-wave era was epic. I just got an LP of French bands from the late '70s put out by FRUSTRATION's label (another current band not afraid of the synth), which is really groundbreaking and fucking great. This Canadian band is way less dark, but takes the very best elements of TUBEWAY ARMY and adds PENETRATION/SIOUXSIE-esque vocals and delivers it in a totally DIY punk way. I think this LP smokes. (TB)
(Mona, no info)

PLAKKAGGIO HC – "Fronte Del Sacco" CD

PLAKKAGGIO HC are Italian skins not afraid to seriously get down with the traditional metal sound, combining (what I think are Satanic) lyrics, squeaky high solos, and pure *eeeevil* all over the CD case. In fact, I found the cover pretty disgusting and disturbing—the music, not so much. It's exactly what I said: metal played by evil Italian skinheads with equal parts pub chants, drum triplets, and guitar leads. (RM)
(Trapped in Society / Ryoeness)

THE POINTS – "Beat in Hell" EP

This is fast, panicky punk from Washington, DC. The songs are catchy, but unfortunately sound a bit too JAY REATARD-esque for me. The music is fast. In fact the first song sounds like it has been sped up too much in post-production. If these guys can actually play that fast, I'll be very impressed. But I'm skeptical since the other two songs are played at a more reasonable speed. Screech-y vocals, monotonous guitar riffs, and then a keyboard comes in to add that something extra. (CK)
(Windian)

POLLUTION – "NS Drugs" EP

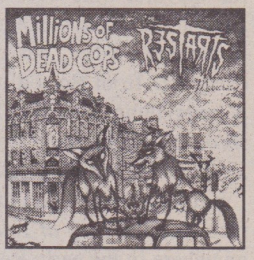
Brooklyn, NY's POLLUTION finds itself musically settled between SoCal's HARPOON GUNZ and the East Coast's MENTALLY CHALLENGED. This comparison alone should excite you to the point of anxiety and fear. POLLUTION seems to have a more coherent direction and a bit tighter sound than the MENTALLY CHALLENGED, yet retain their bleak and nervous qualities. Unlike that band, this EP perfectly combines the balance between abstract and ripping. It's really incredible—the straightforward punk punch is there to keep the listener hooked and interested while the songs skillfully develop into a mess of noise and aggression. This is a fucking beast that will haunt you; find this and memorize each note. (RM)
(Desensitized)

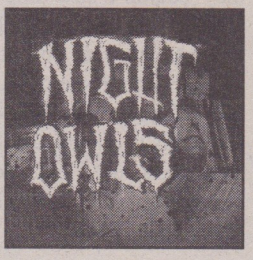
RATMONKEY / WASTED LIFE – split CD

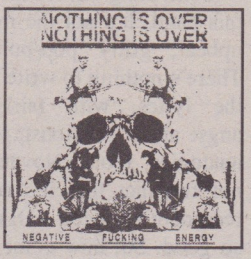
Argh! I am already so anti-CD as it is, but I find split CDs to be extra annoying. I don't know why it bothers me so much, but it just does. It's not like a split vinyl release where it is logical to split the release between the two sides. Anyways, I digress... At least the redeeming quality about this CD is that the two bands involved are pretty decent! WASTED LIFE kicks off the CD with the first six tracks, playing brutal and no-nonsense punk rock! They are comprised of members from the US and the UK, including JJ on vocals, who was previously the frontman for New Jersey's infamous DEAD HEROS. The first song, "Gangland," hits you like a ton of bricks and is reminiscent of classic '80s UK Oi! Unfortunately, that was the highlight for me, as the next five songs lacked the intensity of the first, but overall this is a really strong introduction to this new band—I will be interested in hearing more from these guys for sure! Next up are eight songs by RATMONKEY from the "Black Country" in the Midlands of England. This is a definite shift from WASTED LIFE as they have more of a UK-chaos-punk style similar to the SUBHUMANS. At times they even sound like NEW MODEL ARMY on songs like "End of the Day," which is my favorite of the lot. I just personally never got into that kind of stuff... but if that interests you, definitely check out RATMONKEY as they are really tight and play solid punk rock! (ML)
(Dirty Old Man / Winston / Punker Pages)

THE REACTIONARIES – "Ingenuity" LP

I went into this expecting more of a pop album, but was pleasantly impressed. More '60s garage rock than VEE DEE, but still have a very similar feel. Actually, sounds closer to COUNT FIVE, but, say, mixed with the







DAMNED (it's the vocals that led me to the latter). These guys can write a damn fine song. Featuring former members of DEAD STOP, but not the MINUTEMEN. (VL)
(Deranged)

THE REAL GOOPS – "Discography" CD

I would say it's a coincidence that the little story in the inside of this CD mentions the show space where I got blacked-out drunk for the first time ever (11 Farington St., in Allston, MA) and woke up naked on my couch to camera flashes, but of course since I get every CD from Boston to review… This disc is everything that the REAL GOOPS ever recorded, which seems to be three demos. I've never heard/heard of this band at all but what I'm figurin' from these tunes, they would fit in nicely on the *Play at Your Own Risk* comp, or anywhere in the early Recess Records catalog, for that matter. Fun punk that is still snotty and catchy, goofy, stupid and sloppy. (JU)
(Crack Rock)

REPROACH – LP

During the Y2K-era hardcore explosion, REPROACH ranked among my favorite because they had an early-'80s-USHC-meets-Japanese-hardcore-meets-INFEST style that made them sound fresh and exciting. Their songs were fast and furious, but not ridiculously fast; their approach was angry, but not so angry they couldn't also sing about fun stuff like skating. This LP, an early-period discography of sorts (they're still killing it just as hard today), is a reissue of the one that came out in 2003. I guess this shouldn't be too surprising since this is one record that will rarely be seen in a dusty used bin. You've been offered a second chance. Take it. (BG)
(Holy Shit / Deep Six)

THE REVELING – "3D Radio" CD EP

Something strikes me not quite right about this band. It's not the music, which is decent upbeat, gritty pop-punk. Not the words. There's nothing to write home about regarding the lyrics, with fairly typical existential angst about relationships and chilly seasonal analogies (cold November-type stuff). It's not the fact that it's self-released and self-recorded/produced—DIY all the way. So far, so good. So, how come it doesn't quite jibe? Well, the only three folks credited are the chaps ('tis always the lads, right?) that A.) did the mastering, B.) the cover art, and C.) legal representation. Legal representation!? Is it just cos I've never liked lawyers (or the law)? Or is it just weird that a solidly (supposedly) DIY band has legal representation? And lists them on their CD sleeve with their fucking email!? Is it just me, or what...? Now that's real existential angst! (RK)
(self-released)

THE ROMAN LINE – "Morning Portraits" CD

This is everything I find boring with music these days. All the music is a super polished and overproduced rehashing of the most generic pop-radio-friendly punk that came before it. This is so bad that it almost hurts to listen to. I wish I wasn't able to say that about anything I get to review. Blech. (BD)
(Merman / Monster Zero)

RUIDOSA IMMUNDICIA – "Demo '04" EP

You may be familiar with this band's EP from 2006 and their split LP with Germany's SOLID DECLINE from 2008, but let me tell you, this shit is just as fierce as the recent stuff. It's a rerelease of their 2004 demo on vinyl and is definitely worth picking up. They are from Austria with Chilean members and have an amazing, brutally pissed sounding female vocalist that sings in Spanish about injusticia, libertad y La Lucha. They have definitely evolved in their vocal placement and music writing from this demo, but it sounds better than most of the political, modern, fast-as-fuck hardcore in the same vein. If you are afraid of breakneck speeds and vocals that scare the shit out of you, stay the fuck outta RUIDOSA IMMUNDICIA's way, cuz they mean business. (MB)
(Way Back When)

SAKATAT – "Grindcore Roadkill" 3" CD

Brutal grind from Turkey. I know it's pretty trite to refer to grindcore as "brutal" but that is exactly what these tracks are: *brutal*. Fast as fuck crushing riffs in the style of the early Earache releases, with the influences leaning in the punk and early thrash direction instead of towards metal; played perfectly and recorded with absolutely everything on 11 and fully peaked. There are seven tracks here, culled from various split EPs...and it was totally worth seeking out a machine that would enable me to listen to this three-inch plastic wonder-disc of intense madness. (WN)
(Corrupted Harmony Music)

SANGRAAL – "Fatal Coordinates" EP

Old-school black metal with troll-like vocals. OK, here's the story. There are two US bands named SANGRAAL, one on the East Coast and the other the West. There are two US bands named GEHENNA, and again, one on the East Coast and the other on the West. This SANGRAAL is from the West Coast and contains former members of the West Coast GEHENNA. They thrash and grind away; it's not nu-school noisy tremolo-picking black metal. CELTIC FROST would be a good starting point, but somehow there are hardcore/metalcore overtones that are hard to place. I love how their tracks sound like all hell is breaking lose like on old VENOM or CELTIC FROST records. Good stuff. (MH)
(Rock Cocaine)

SECRET CUTTER – "Occupation Shutdown" EP

Math-rock grind with screamed vocals. Reminds me of ACME or DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN. When a band lists the pressing information ("41 red, 43 gold, 2 orange, 7 dirty gold, 9 dirty red, 198 black, 18 tests"), and mentions that the rough mix of this was downloaded hundreds of times from their MySpace page, I call foul. The song "Bees of the Mind," which actually was the slowest and the most interesting, is a pretty good song. Otherwise, I've heard all of this before, and I never really wanted to hear it in the first place. Dudes with plugs in their ears and baggy jeans, take note. (VL)
(Square of Opposition / Discontent)

SEEIN RED – "Pogo" EP

A pretty killer idea and an even better EP. If you like hardcore punk and you don't know SEEIN RED, then you've been living under a fucking rock. The Dutch trio has been at it since 1990. This EP is a document that celebrates their two decades of hardcore and their love for Dutch punk. Eight covers of first-wave Holland hardcore, recorded by the band to give it the raw demo feel that it fucking needs… The RAPERS, LULLABIES, NOXIOUS, BIZON KIDS, JESUS AND THE GOSPELFUCKERS, PISTACHE BV, RONDOS, and PANDEMONIUM are all given the treatment. This is one of the few truly legendary hardcore bands still playing today and this single is a great birthday gift (even if it's not their birthday). (WN)
(Way Back When)

TY SEGALL & MIKAL CRONIN – "Reverse Shark Attack" LP

Yet another in the avalanche of TY SEGALL releases… this time with MIKAL CRONIN from CHARLIE AND THE MOONHEARTS (whoever the fuck they are/were). I probably would have skipped this—my loss, as it's a tremendous slice of garage psych slop that makes my ears ring. There is a tribal element to this record, as if they pulled the music apart to the bare bones and recorded it through a wall of fuzz. The drums smash and thud, and the guitars are so tinny they sound like cymbals. The PINK FLOYD cover "Take Up Thy Stethoscope and Walk" has to be heard to be believed…totally out there, *maaaaan*. They finish up the disc with a ten-minute opus that starts off as a mellow acoustic ditty and finishes in a blown-out wall of noise and haze. Spark one up, strap in…you're in for a bumpy ride. Wonderful. (TB)
(Kill Shaman)

SEVERANCE PACKAGE – "All Down Hill" EP

Mid-tempo punk, male/female vocals, and catchy songs that are never quite poppy, but they are never anything close to "hard" either. Can you imagine if the PROFITS were a bar-punk band? 'Cause that's kinda what it's like. (WN)
(Shut Up)

SEXUALLY RETARDED – "Pump" CD

This looked like it was gonna be some shitty bar-punk joker GG bullshit. It kind of is, but is of another nature than I initially suspected from the artless band name and yellow-penis-surfing-a-wave cover art (though I guess the image kind of has more Ft. Thunder stylings than anything ALLIN). It's actually more of a tribute to the JESUS LIZARD than GG ALLIN; from the vocal YOW-isms to the savage tech rhythm attack, the math-rawk guitar belies a more punk background. The way the bass/drums/guitars intersect reminds me somewhat of MONORCHID, but this isn't playful, and it's way more rock than anything Chris Thomson has ever been involved with. Something about this is kind of dull with the added flavor of "ironic" macho douchebag undertones. They have a song called "Banging My Muse." There are no lyrics included obviously, which would have helped contextualize that song, and perhaps also another ditty, "Isle of Lesbos." I loved HAMMERHEAD and CIRCUS LUPUS and JESUS LIZARD when I was a teenager in the '90s, so it's not like I don't get this, I just think it's kind of a flat record. (LG)
(Sympathizer)

SICK MORMONS – "Why Does Shit Keep Falling from the Sky?" EP

Modern melancholic melodic punk in a similar vein to bands such as PEDESTRIANS, LOSER LIFE, or maybe a less WIPERS-influenced ESTRANGED; I'd imagine that SICK MORMONS listen to those bands, plus maybe AGENT ORANGE. The songs are proficient, don't rely too heavily on clichéd signifiers, and get their point across, with their passion being carried by the vocals in particular. There's nothing especially boring, but something is missing that keeps them from being as captivating as I think they could be. (DG)
(Demonomania / Gummopunx)

THE SINGULARITY – "A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Drunkenness" CD

A Bay Area band that sounds like a lesser DILLINGER FOUR with a little NOFX. Not bad, but not very distinctive either—which may help these guys in a Fat/Epitaph world. (RL)
(self-released)

SLAVE SCENE – "Fuck Off Away from Me/Shit Gait"

I had sky-high expectations for this record, given how much I loved (and even blogged about). this band and their tapes, and while this 7" is better than most, it fell way short of what I was hoping. "Fuck Off Away from Me" is pretty up-tempo compared to their other stuff, with the repetitive riffing and doomed Floridian vibe that characterizes SLAVE SCENE's other stuff, but the riffs aren't that convincing, the vocals lack the spite that's present in their other recordings, and the faster tempo diminishes some of the power. "Shit Gait" is slower and a bit better, but unfortunately suffers from the same shortcomings mentioned above. In lieu of this record, I recommend tracking down the *Heaven Only Knows* demo, the *Slavves* live tape, and the split tape with (I believe) SHV, and hopefully whatever they do next will be better.
(Deranged)

SLIMY CUNT & THE FISTFUCKS – "Bastards" EP

I didn't think the music could be worse than the name of the band or the terrible sleeve design, but then I listened to the songs and discovered the music was in fact more shitty than the name of the band (though the artwork is worse than the music). One more reason to hate Boston. (MU)
(Patac)

SMALLTOWN – "Read Between the Lines" 10"

Eight tracks in total on this impressive release from Sweden's best street-punk-meets-mod-revival band. More rough-and-tumble than their last long-player, which suits the hook-laden sound way better. Think SLF jamming with the CHORDS and healthy respect to early SWINGING UTTERS. This is another solid record with great packaging from local honchos Pirates Press. (SD)
(Pirates Press)

SNOWING – "Fuck Your Emotional Bullshit" EP

This isn't really my kind of thing, but if you like your music more on the emo side of things, you might be into this. SNOWING is upbeat with lots of riffage in the guitar department and some heavy breakdowns. The emotion really comes through in the vocals—a bit too much for me. The band gets bonus points for naming one of the songs "Methuselah Rookie Card." (BD)
(Square of Opposition)

SOCIAL CIRCKLE – "On the Run/Police Police"

On their latest 7", SOCIAL CIRCKLE ramps up the energy level for a pair of jangly, punkish tunes—definitely less urgent than the material on their rippin' *I've Got Afflictions* EP, a record that coalesces that classic Boston HC energy. Again, not quite the kind of stop-on-dime stuff they're capable of, but record's standout is "Police Police" (a SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN cover)—a defiant, kick-ass anthem about police abuses that captures the band's stinging guitar sound. A respectable release. (SS)
(Way)

S.P.I.C. – "Day Drunk" CD

Power-pop garage? Garage pop? How about just good rock'n'roll? The acronym stands for SATANIC PUNK INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY, a name that sounds cooler in its full form, if you ask me. I've got to admit that this album sounds way better than the initial expectations I had when I first threw it on. Really, with an album title like *Day Drunk* I was anticipating some bluesy and boring bar rock, but what we have instead is a nice mix of catchy punk rock'n'roll mixed with a loose, poppy garage twang similar to STRANGE BOYS or BLACK LIPS. The lyrics are pretty meaningless but well sung, and the excellent

guitar work really adds some variation to the songs, making the album listenable throughout. I must say that this is a pretty damn good debut and it wouldn't surprise me to see the band get bigger someday. (BG)
(Pop. 2121)

SSR – "Nuclear Nation" LP

SEDITION SUB ROSA has an interesting sound, mixing some metallic flourishes into an essentially punk D-beat sound. I like that the band keeps to a more medium tempo in the '80s style instead of hauling ass on every song, and the bass sound and playing are a definite strength. While a couple of these tracks are a touch undistinguished, the good ones are quite good. Unlike a lot of records, I found the second side had the stronger material, particularly "State Sentinals" where the vocalist turns up the venom a notch and the guitarist drops a killer rock solo. (AU)
(Distort Reality)

STOLEN PARTS – "Anonymous" EP

Ah, nice-guy-with-beards-rock, how I love thee. Gainesville, you have a lot to answer for. It's gravelly, good time anthem-punk, kinda like DILLINGER FOUR or the RINGERS. It has ex-members of bands that sound like this, too. I like this kind of shit... Really, I do... It just all sounds the same. If you like the Fest and bands from Florida or Minneapolis, you'll dig. (TB)
(Kiss of Death)

TACO LEG – "Freemasons Hall/Sunbathing in Squalor"

Plodding post-punk (the shambolic kind, not the funky kind) with an Australian bent. Fitting, as it's from Perth. They seem to draw from the same collective Australian musical subconscious as UV RACE and other groups from that continent. This sort of skronk fares better on cassette, or at least survives better in numbers. If this had been an EP instead of a single, I believe it'd do better, but overall at least it's a lot better than the band name. (BB)
(Fan Death)

13TH CHIME – "Lost Album" LP

England's 13TH CHIME released three singles in the early '80s, which were reissued on LP along with some demos by Sacred Bones last year. The band started at the beginning of the death-rock scene—around the time the SISTERS OF MERCY formed, the early days of DEATH IN JUNE, and the BIRTHDAY PARTY's move to London. They certainly had the early goth/death-rock look, but the sound was still rooted in punk—before the darkness covered the rock. This LP, as the name implies, was the band's lost album, never released until now. It's much more upbeat than the singles, with some songs sounding like never-to-be dance-punk hits on Rough Trade. Listening to the reverb-drenched opening song, it's hard not to think BIRTHDAY PARTY Lite. This music isn't essential, but it's pretty good stuff if you enjoy early post-punk or very early death-rock. (MU)
(Sacred Bones)

THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB – "Convertible" LP

This band is an incredibly popular folk-punk band from Pensacola, FL, and this album was released in 2008, marking over ten years of the band's existence. The lyrical content has a focus on Christian religion stuff and reflects their typical sound; it'is really great if you love this music, which I bet you totally do. XOXO. (HD)
(No Idea/Plan-It-X-South)

THIS MOMENT IN BLACK HISTORY – "Public Square" LP

Another platter from the Midwest's finest purveyors of tweaked-out rock'n'roll. The MC5 on steroids—crazed, out-of-control R&B with a twisted edge. Like an emo CLONE DEFECTS, this LP pulverizes and leaves you breathless. The name sucks *maaaan*, but the tunes are dope. (TB)
(Smog Veil)

TOKYO ELECTRON – "AZ 238" LP

The second album from TOKYO ELECTRON has an appealing combination of musical styles, going from spazzy punk to sincere indie garage, throwing in some pretty guitars, and then getting all noisy. The anguished vocals occasionally sound like Mark Mothersbaugh. This seems like a record that may get more interesting the more I listen to it. (CK)
(FDH)

TROPIEZO – CD

This prolific Puerto Rican band keeps cranking out killer hardcore discs; I only hope that folks are noticing. There are fifteen songs in eleven-and-a-half minutes—all totally ripping, but with enough melody to keep you hooked. Every aspect in TROPIEZO's delivery is textbook, but presented so well that I would never think to use a word like "typical" or "generic," because they are just too damned good. Fans of LA PIOVRA/SMART COPS might like the quirky structure, fans of VÖETSEK will enjoy the guitar work, fans of DISCARGA will enjoy the drummer's intensity, but mostly, fans of punk should enjoy the disc. (WN)
(Discos de Hoy)

TUBERS – "Anachronous" LP

This is what I imagine PLEASE INFORM THE CAPTAIN THIS IS A HIJACK would sound like if they were a bit more subdued and not as screamy. I can't really tell if this is a concept album, but it definitely seems to have a post-apocalyptic theme. There's a weird vibe going on with this record—it's something I can't really put my finger on, but the deeper into the record I get, the more I like it. I'd say this is definitely worth giving a listen. (BD)
(No Idea / Echo Canyon / Bakery Outlet)

TYVEK – "Blunt Instrumental" 12"

This band had one of my favorite releases of the past couple of years, the *Summer Burns* double-7" EP, which was buzzing with dynamic energy. They've put out a few other records since, but none have matched that release's immediacy. This is no exception. A one-sided, five-track 12" (with some rather attractive art printed on the other side) that sounds like something tossed off at practice. It's not bad, but the reality of listening to this doesn't come anywhere near living up to the excitement I had when I saw a TYVEK record in my pile. I fear the same fate for the excited music buyer on returning home from the record store. (AM)
(Night People)

UNDER AL KRITIK – LP

The music on this LP is all over the map. There are elements of post-punk, metal, thrashy hardcore, and melodic punk all piled into the mix. The vocals are the highlight of the band—raw and throaty with that voice-cracking thing that is popular among the Danes. I wish there were a little less going on in these songs. I feel bad dismissing UNDER AL KRITIK, because there's some cool guitar work on this LP and the band is made up of able musicians, but I just wish the music were a little less of a wacky hodge-podge. However, I'm sure this will appeal to fans of throw-everything-into-a-blender type hardcore/punk, so don't just take my word. (CI)
(Dårlige Hår Liv, no contact info)

USA WASTE – "Defiant Anthems of Truth and Justice" CD

Starts off with some crushing melodic moshcore sounding kind of like PAPA ROACH, then it goes all over the place, from a cliché political punk song to an acoustic ballad. It is cool that these punks are interested in politics, but you're left wishing they had smarter lyrics than "President Bush can suck my dick" as the chorus. Although the music may be mediocre, this album does rank on the top ten coolest album covers of the year. It's totally amazing! It's this picture of a punk with a huge mohawk punching out a secret service guard while the White House burns in the background. (FS)
(Crack Rock)

U.X. VILEHEADS – "First EP" EP

Members of DS-13, INSTÄNGD, and REGULATIONS play in this band and it's on the much esteemed Deranged label. Need I say more? I would hope that those facts alone would pique your curiosity a bit. Naturally, the music is early-'80s inspired, traditional hardcore—it really does sound like the mighty DS-13 worked over and slowed down just a notch by REGULATIONS-styled guitar and snotty attitude. The lyrics lean toward the "wasted life" and "I'm a fuck-up" approach, which is something most of us can relate to at one time or another, right? Listening to this makes me want to do the Huntington Beach Strut with a sleeveless flannel and chains around my boots, getting the frustration and violence out of my system. Swedish punk rules and this EP just further proves it. (BG)
(Deranged)

VACANT STATE – "Internal Conflict" EP

Fuck! VACANT STATE fuck your shit up! Side A starts with a frantic 47-second ripper called "Obsessive/Compulsive Disorder." Fuck! This aural mess segues right into "What Right?" This is ugly punk with gruff singing that is some of the best in the business! As great as "What Right?" is, you cannot be prepared for the scalding riffs of "No Say." This shit is some of the most crazed punk available in the northern hemisphere!! "Vile" finishes off side A with a slower menacing groove. This crap is guaranteed to make you uncomfortable! Side B is five minutes of doom and gloom. Let's play side A again! (BR)
(Deranged)

VAPID – "Practically Dead" LP

BLONDIE if they never went disco, or a more punk VELOCITY GIRL. Something that totally would be part of Warped Tour. You know—that kind of indie punk girl-fronted band that has a bunch of songs about boys? They lean too far into indie-pop, even stumble into tween territory, and the lyrics are kind of rhyme-y. This recording sounds slick, boring, and uninspired. I liked their 7" and their songs on the *Emergency Room* compilation, but this is major blah. Bummer. They get a little sloppy and weird on the last two songs on the first side; those songs are decent, but everything else is...eh. I just wish they would toughen up and get a little dangerous, you know...fuck shit up? (MM)
(Nominal / Deranged)

VIRULENCE – "If This Isn't a Dream... 1985-1989" CD

VIRULENCE was a mid/late-'80s Southern California band that released a single LP on Alchemy Records before morphing into FU MANCHU and achieving relative success playing bad stoner rock. This reissue has the LP plus some unreleased live tracks (including a VOID cover) and demo material. The band's later-FLAG/BL'AST worship is by-the-numbers—suburban angst lyrics over HC with slow, extended bridges and meandering guitar leads. Pretty derivative stuff and not as good as labelmates NEUROSIS or the MELVINS, but not altogether bad, though the liner notes mention the members wish the LP recording "had been a lot more raw sounding," and I'm inclined to agree. Still, "Dead Weight" is pretty lively and VIRULENCE really hits the mark with the plodding, repetitive "Blank Stare." The earliest demo tracks document the band at a more primitive, straightforward HC stage. Overall, cool for nostalgics and BL'AST fanatics, but otherwise not essential. (CS)
(Southern Lord)

WEAPONS OF THE FUTURE – "Surrender" CD

Equal parts WHITE STRIPES, VSS, PJ HARVEY, and some kinda garage rock. I'm not sure if this is punk, but when the girl sings and they stick to the keyboards, it kinda sounds like the VANISHING. I like the VANISHING. (WN)
(self released)

WESTERN HYMN – "Living Things" LP

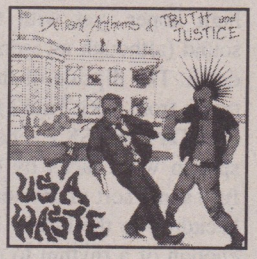
You can tell this band is from the Northwest—the desperate, trebly DEAD MOON-isms seep into the guitar sound and into Craig's spluttering, almost howled vocal style. His voice also sorta reminds me a little of Jack White's, but in a way less rock way—I think Fred Cole is definitely the starting point... WESTERN HYMN plays perfect Olympia doomed dance party/house show jams, which makes sense since they feature Sarah Utter of the BANGS and Craig Extine of SERUM GREYS and OLD HAUNTS. I wish Sarah's vocals were a little more prominent; she has such an awesome voice, and the idea of dual vocals with those two is kind of dreamy. She just does occasional back-ups. This is a great wintertime record; it's dark and stark, but somehow comforting. Makes me think of BILLY CHILDISH's solo blues stuff also. My favorite songs were on side two—"Hot and Cold" being the jam. My only complaint would be that sometimes it seems same-y, but they definitely capture a particular mood and sound idea. The covers are all individually letter-pressed; thus, this is limited to 300. It looks great—get it for your gloomy winter up-all-night get-togethers... (LG)
(self-released)

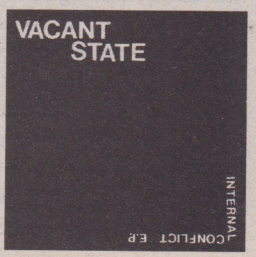
WHISKEY TRENCH – "Television" CD

WHISKEY TRENCH plays catchy, tuneful basement punk—mining that HOT WATER MUSIC-meets-LEATHERFACE vein with a few nods to other melodic punk bands like CRIMPSHRINE, very early LEMONHEADS, and even first album SOCIAL DISTORTION, especially in the vocals. Great stuff. (AM)
(Kiss of Death)

ZATREST – "Pecka Vedle Pecky" CD

My only complaint about this CD is that it is all sung in Czech (I think). Not that it's bad that ZATREST is Czech—I quite like the Czech Republic and I'll be there for work around the time that this issue hits the stands! I just wish that I could sing along to some of the catchy choruses, but it's no fault of the band that I don't know Czech... The songs on this CD cover a lot of ground with influences like STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, the RUTS, and, I'm sure, a good number of Eastern European bands from the '80s like REJESTRACJA from Poland—or any number of German bands like PUBLIC TOYS or TERRORGRUPPE. The music is very polished and well played and verges on the mod side of things, including a





great Czech-language cover version of "That's Entertainment" by the JAM! If you're into melodic European punk, then you should check out this band! (ML)
(Papagajuv Hlasatel)

V/A – "A Jockey Club Reunion Live at the Southgate House" CD

In the early '80s, a few promoters started the Jockey Club to promote local Newport, KY/Cincinnati, OH area bands as well as a place for touring bands to play (they mention the first show they had was for BLACK FLAG). I was pretty excited to check this out as I have family from Fort Thomas, the town next to Newport. Fast-forward to 2008, when this was recorded, and you get five bands from that period reuniting and playing around three to five songs: SS-20, the LIBERTINES U.S., BPA, the THANGS, and the REDUCED. My favorite band was the LIBERTINES U.S. who sounded like a cool cross between HÜSKER DÜ and early R.E.M. Between the songs are some of the old scenesters talking about how the club was started, the local personalities, Shorty, a former promoter and club owner, and other what-it-was-like-back-then-type stories. I really enjoyed this CD; it was cool to hear about this scene, resurrected from many years ago. Next time I'm in the area, I'll have to look for old graffiti or other signs of this forgotten scene. (VL)
(Aurore Press)

V/A – "At Both Ends" 2xEP

This is a real treat for those still hanging on to an era of hardcore that had seemingly passed. The bands featured on this double-EP all more or less thrived in the late '90s hardcore scene, with the exception of UNRESTRAINED, who are a newer band (I think), but sound a lot like LEFT WITH NOTHING (Tacoma, early '00s). Given their ex-members of PULLING TEETH and DESPERATE MEASURES, I had pretty high hopes, yet with their decidedly dated sound (although awesome), they kinda let me down. The flipside of the first record has two tracks from Greg Trial's new band, BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY. These songs are basically spoken word tacks by Greg; they attempt to fuse some sort of ambient hardcore music as a backdrop to the lyrical barrage while keeping enough of a rhythm to call it a song. With an obvious Buddhist bent on his lyrics and intent, the tracks, although boring and shitty as songs, are pretty cool as conceptual entities. BANE shows up with a couple new songs (exclusive tracks by all bands for the release) that you might as well have already heard. I have never been a BANE fan and always thought they were the worst of the hit-or-miss Boston hardcore scene. The cookie-monster vocals, melodic mid-song jaunts, and mosh-crush that made them in the first place saturate both of their contributions here. Check, check, and check. Canada's GRADE shares wax with BANE and...woah, having never heard them, I was floored. This is the worst mid-tempo, radio friendly/singy-songy crap imaginable. Likwe imagine, if you will, the spawning of MTVemo—I believe GRADE may have been on the front lines, fighting for the emo. Just dreadful—I don't see how anyone vaguely associated with hardcore could enjoy this stuff! I should mention these records were released as a final double-issue and celebration send-off to *At Both Ends*, the long-running mag from Vancouver. After eight issues they have called it quits and put together quite the package; look in the zine review section for a full account of written material. (RM)
(At Both Ends)

V/A – "Fat Wrecktrospective" 3xCD

A truly wonderful three-disc collection of the best of the finest punk rock label of the last two decades, bar none. Fat got pigeonholed with a particular "sound' early on (much as Epitaph did a decade earlier, partly on the back of NOFX)—that speedy melodic hardcore, as exemplified by the likes of NOFX, LAGWAGON, PROPAGANDHI, NO USE FOR A NAME, and GOOD RIDDANCE. But just glancing at the huge roster of classic bands that Fat has released (disc one is a true "greatest hits" of some of them), puts a lie to that misconception. What do the DESCENDENTS, DICKIES, AGAINST ME!, ANTI-FLAG, REAL MACKENZIES, STAR FUCKING HIPSTERS, DILLINGER FOUR, LAWRENCE ARMS, SNUFF, SCREECHING WEASEL, SWINGING UTTERS, and the EPOXIES (to name but a few) all have in common? Not a lot, save that they all fucking rock and they all have releases out on Fat. Disc two has some classy unreleased demo tracks, and the third disc includes the Fat Singles Club (actually, the weakest disc, in my humble opinion). This is a truly mandatory collection from the definitive punk/hardcore label of the last two decades—for real. (RK)
(Fat Wreck)

V/A – "Protect 2: A Benefit for the National Association to Protect Children" CD

The title speaks of the cause. The CD includes lots of "unreleased and rare tracks" from an eclectic mix, including the COPYRIGHTS, GREG GINN, ANCHOR DOWN, DOPAMINES, and YESTERDAY'S RING, to name a few of the 27 bands. Good as far as comps go. (RL)
(Scissor Press)

V/A – "Slovenské Vinyly Nezomierajú" LP

The enclosed note says this is the first-ever vinyl compilation of Slovakian bands, all of who are "currently active and DIY." They were able to get a bunch of good fucking songs for this groundbreaking LP. There are a few bands with a driving hardcore sound paired with melodic vocals, of whom ILUZIA stand out the most. ILEGALITY has a still fast but righteous tough sound à la CATWEAZLE. ROTTEN ASS and TMA play gnarly crust, the latter approaching the great UNCLE CHARLES. PERSONA NON GRATA is close to SWALLOWING SHIT—heavy as fuck and ballistic—so I am stoked. IF THERE IS A HOPE channels that '93 Euro-emo-HC sound à la ANANDA. Out of fourteen bands/songs, pretty much every one is worth hearing—that's awfully good. In terms of the breadth of material and the overall quality, this reminds me of the amazing Anima *Food Not Bombs* comp LP of yesteryear. This LP will clue you in to some bands that hopefully those of us away from Eastern Europe will get to hear more of. My only real disappointment was the lack of any kind of insert or even contact information for the bands. (JM)
(Adrian Nagy)

V/A – "Twin Cities/Ruhrgebiet" CD

This is a collection of current bands from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area and Germany's largely industrial Ruhr region. There isn't much info included regarding bands featured other than a list of their Myspace pages (ugh). Hell, there really isn't any info about anything other than the list of bands. The only ones I recognize are IN DEFENCE and RIPSNORTER. There's a whole lot of ska and Fat Records-type songs here, then a couple hardcore/melodic hardcore bits toward the end. I never thought I'd say this, but IN DEFENCE takes the cake on this one. (BD)
(You've Got a Visitor, no info)

V/A – "Yotsuva: Japanese Noiz Cruster Comp" LP

Been a while since there has been a real kick-ass new comp. This LP showcases three of the more prolific (ISTERISMO, DEATH DUST EXTRACTOR, ZYANOSE) and one new-to-me (LASTLY) players in the current blown-out-overdriven-to-hell-and-back Japanese noise-crust scene. All of the bands on this comp deliver quality tracks, and all of them more or less follow in the post-GLOOM world of distort distort distort mayhem and fucked-up, fuzzy, fist-pumping ragers. I think this record may already be sold out, but if the noize is your bag, it's worth looking into. (JU)
(Crust War)

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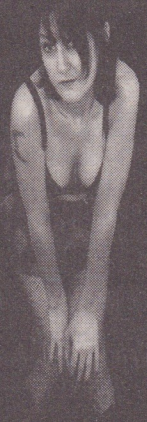

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AGATHA – This cassette, entitled *Panic Attack*, comes wrapped in a great looking screen-printed fold-over cover. The tunes contained within seem to be informed as much by the likes of HUGGY BEAR as they do by SPITBOY or even the GOSSIP. The lyrics have personal/sociopolitical feel, mostly concentrating on queer and transgender issues. The song entitled "Nervous Gender" had me all ready to hear some primitive synthesizers, but these syncopated rhythms are played with bass, drums, and guitar, and it appears that almost every member contributes vocals. One might guess that the band hails from Olympia, but the contact address is in Seattle. (Jon) (7-song cassette, lyrics included. 2317 14th Ave S, Seattle, WA 98144, agatha206@yahoo.com)

ARCTIC FLOWERS – A great introduction to a new band from a city that can't seem to stop pumping out great punk bands of every style. The first track here really reminds me of a female-fronted PROLETARIAT, mainly due to the guitar parts. It's angular and sharp yet sweeping and melodic. Those adjectives apply to the rest of the songs on here but there are plenty of moments that are less classic-anarcho-style, where the riffs are a tad more BORN AGAINST. There are also some "goth-y" moments in the last song with flanged bass and such. The whole thing is soaked in cool guitar leads with lots of mood and melody. A great demo that, as the accompanying note states, is unfortunately sold out. But don't fret, there is a 7" and split 7" with Vancouver, BC's SPECTRES due very shortly, so be on the lookout. (Justin) (4-song cassette, no lyrics. Arctic Flowers c/o Stan, 555 NE Fargo #5, Portland, OR 97212, arcticflowerspdx@gmail.com)

BLOOD BOMBER – MOTÖRHEAD and DISCHARGE—it's a proven formula, and these Philadelphia punks pull it off pretty well. Charging drums, a blazing solo that rises out of the chaos every now and then, and even a killer half-time breakdown to keep things interesting. I could do without the occasional melodic tune to the vocals—it doesn't really suit the rest of the attack (or the logo, for that matter), but a solid introduction to a new band. (Robert) (9-song CD, no lyrics, www.myspace.com/bloodbomberpunks)

BOG PEOPLE – Damn, this demo is great too! Total UK82, VARUKERS, CHAOS UK style. Raw, for sure, but not super distorted and noisy like most bands doing this style these days. This shit is puking, pogoing, fuckin' punks roaming the streets in packs on the hunt for cider. Absolutely great and one of the best things I've heard in a while. (Justin) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, $3 ppd. 32 NE Fremont, Portland, OR 97212, bogpeoplepdx@gmail.com)

BROKEN PATTERNS – Three tracks is not enough! BROKEN PATTERNS is fast and melodic. This recording is really awesome and makes them sound a little like the GERMS. The songwriting also seems similar to that of the WIPERS. Excellent. (Helen) (3-song cassette, no lyrics. www.myspace.com/brokenpatterns)

LA CARA OCULTA DEL RNR / WAVELETS – LA CARA OCULTA DEL RNR kicks out three upbeat punk songs that start maybe on a major key UK punk note and end on a more surf note, all of which I would describe as great music to skip school to. WAVELETS play noodle-y indie rock, maybe a la WAXWING or HOT WATER MUSIC, that doesn't meet *MRR* review criteria but is actually OK. (Dan) (6-song cassette, no lyrics. www.myspace.com/lacaraocultadelrocknroll)

CRAWL – Wall-of-noise style grind/powerviolence assault from CRAWL. This sounds as menacing as anything I've heard in a long, long time... sounds like it was recorded in a fucking sewer. CRAWL is about two steps away from being pure noise-core, but those steps make all the difference. This is far from a throwaway pile of distortion, this is a serious force, and the demo slays. CRAWL used to called DETHBOX, and is complete brutality. Get into it. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included. Cavity Creep, 5255 W. 66th Ave, Unit D-6, Arvada, Colorado 80003, priestshc@yahoo.com)

CULO – From the juvenile "Can't Grow Up" to the childish "Desperate For Dkks," you know that this is gonna be a ripper. There's an early-'80s Boston feel, especially on "Drained Brains," which is the only non-breakneck balls-out burner on the tape. CULO has two guitars, but their lack of bass is my only complaint—a little low end never hurt anyone, fellas. To-the-point, not-fucking-around gritty hardcore. Great shits. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics included. 138 Melrose Ave, South Elgin, Illinois 60177, nathangattis@att.net)

DEPLETION – Skillful crust from Montreal with extra-good riffs and melodies. Approved. (Helen) (9-song cassette, lyrics included. 2027 Rue Frontenac, Montreal, Quebec, H2K 3W6, CANADA)

DIENTE PERRO – Fucking killer skate punk from Puerto Rico. DIENTE PERRO has mid-tempo catchy songs with ultra tasteful guitar leads and sing-a-long vocals that would probably be even *more* infectious if I spoke Spanish. It might be good that mi Espanol is pretty rusty, or these songs would be stuck in my head all fucking day. Great shit, and it comes with an ultra punk backpatch. (Robert) (9-song CD, lyrics included, Ave de Diego 89, MCS 517, Suite 105, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00927-6346, www.myspace.com/dienteperro)

EVIL KLOTTEN & THE DALLI DALLIS – A very strange hybrid of CITIZEN FISH styled ska punk and catchy Deutsch punk. Heavy on the horns and the sing-a-longs, so I feel the need to mention the CITIZEN FISH reference yet again, and not just the ska parts because the guitar tone and songwriting are very similar. The Deutsch punk tinge manages to keep it unique. Perhaps this isn't for everyone here at *MRR*, but it is very good. (Robert) (14-song CD, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/dallidallis)

FOUND DEAD IN A TRUNK – This band would be a dead ringer for play on MRR Radio with Hal, Ron, and Adam DJ-ing. It's energetic, melodic punk that's somewhere between quality pop punk and the more tuneful side of the Killed By Death spectrum, with vocals that are somewhat gruff and somewhat soulful, and leads that work well with the music. The production does whisper "professional" and might turn some people off, but I think it brings things out more. (Dan) (8-song CD, no lyrics. kgrave2000@hotmail.com)

FULL MEAT JACKET – The note that accompanied this tape claimed this band was some people from AWESOME COLOR playing the best hardcore someone else from AWESOME COLOR had ever heard. It's sort of yowling guitar, angry-man-demanding-something on vocals, dismissive drums—meaning some sorta basement noise that probably has more in common with HARRY PUSSY than DIE KREUZEN. It's definitely Midwestern in nature. They've scrawled "My War" on the cover, and maybe this is a comment on that record: man-feelings for men who prefer dark complaints to macho rage? (Layla) (no track listing, no lyrics. Heath Moerland, 125 N Gainsborough, Royal Oak, MI 48067, fagtapes@hotmail.com)

FULL-RED – FULL-RED is sort of an Olympia super group, with Heather Dunn (one of the greatest drummers of the '90s—she played with TIGER TRAP, and the first RAINCOATS reunion tour) on guitar and singing and Carrie from GUN OUTFIT also on guitar and singing... All four women in the band sing and they all have great voices, (the bassist Ilana and the drummer Alex also sing), and while FULL-RED reminds me a little of GUN OUTFIT (because Carrie's guitar style and voice are so distinctive) it has more of a VELVET UNDERGROUND *Loaded* feel. It also brings to mind this band that Kathi Wilcox from BIKINI KILL and Bridget Cross from UNREST did on Teen Beat Records that had no name! Anyway if you are in the mood for some melancholic music with Moe Tucker style drums and Lou Reed sounding guitars and cool girls singing, then try this. (Layla) (3-song CDR, no lyrics. PO Box 835, Olympia, WA 98507, fullredfullred@gmail.com)

GHUNDI – An Irish four-piece that churns out seven blasts of hardcore on this 2008 demo. Think BORN/DEAD and the PIST and you will be in the right neighborhood, then just turn left on AUS ROTTEN street and blast your SEX PISTOLS tape and you'll be cruising just fine. A young band, I'm guessing, and the kind that inspires mohicans and studded jackets in their town, no doubt. (Robert) (7-song CD, lyrics included. c/o Kollin Finnerty, Liam Mellows Rd, Loughrea, Co Galway IRELAND, neverinamillion@gmail.com)

GROWN UPS – Melodic garage-y punk rock from the Canadian Plains. For comparisons, turn your ears to MOTO, then to J CHURCH, and then listen to MARKED MEN really quietly with just one lamp turned on in the far corner of your bedroom, then blast some SUPERCHUNK, but play the record about 8 rpms too slow. "Bad Poetry" is the best jam on a tape full of super catchy tunes with an awesome guitar sound that hovers over the whole recording. Completely infectious shit, you can order a tape or just nab the tracks for free on the internerd. Win/Win! (Robert) (7-song cassette, no lyrics, wearegrownups@gmail.com or grown-ups.tumblr.com)

GUNS N' ROSA PARKS – Killer hardcore attack from one of the more unfortunately named bands kicking around these days. Just some no-frills USHC here, appropriate use of breakdowns and great vocals that are intense but intelligible. It's over before I really get to rocking, so I hit rewind and do it all again. Solid shit. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included. Cavity Creep, 5255 W. 66th Ave. Unit D-6, Arvada, Colorado 80003, priestshc@yahoo.com)

THE INQUISITION – Basic raw hardcore punk from Kansas City. Pretty typical basement recording, with jackhammer drums and snotty vox driving along guitar-break-friendly, circle-pit-inducing, frustrated Midwestern punk. Get them in a studio and there might be some magic...good shit. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Max McBride, 4124 Charlotte, Kansas City, MO 64110, mmcbride01@gmail.com)

THE LENIENTS – Thirteen tracks of snotty punk rock along the lines of SCREECHING WEASEL (but dirtier), IMPERIAL LEATHER (but not as punk), TURBONEGRO (but if they recorded in a basement), or perhaps OFF WITH THEIR HEADS (but not as melodic). Mostly, they remind me of WHITE TRASH SUPERMAN, but that's a comparison likely lost on most folks, which is why I started out with all those other comparisons. Super catchy and totally raw head-bobbing shits that I like more and more as the disc progresses. The LENIENTS hail from Finland, and that is very far from my house. (Robert) (13-song CD, no lyrics. Lehaustie 35as9, 20720 Turku, FINLAND, www.thelenients.net)

THE MALLARD – The band was described as riot grrrl by the person that gave me the tape, which I can only assume was inferred because there are women musicians involved? It does not immediately bring to mind any bands from that era, maybe the later, more rock SLEATER KINNEY stuff? THE MALLARD initially made me think of early-'80s Athens style, like PYLON. It has the same sort of rock thing, but also the disparate/good use of space and dubby bass. The woman vocalist can really sing and has this really simple strong voice that brings to mind AUTOCLAVE, MARY TIMONY, and yep Corin Tucker of SLEATER KINNEY. The music has a touch of early NY punk, a sorta TELEVISION/PATTI SMITH guitar sound, then it's a little FUGAZI, then sorta BREEDERS-ish. THE MALLARD is a really interesting band, but I think they are sorta more indie rock than punkers. Like I bet they would have gotten write ups in *Sassy* magazine and the *Melody Maker* if they were around when I was a teenager... I actually couldn't decide if I liked them or not, though I can tell they are a good band, and if any of this sounds intriguing you will probably dig this. (Layla) (6-song cassette, no lyrics. no address)

MANIPULATION – Raging '80s-style hardcore that channels the straight forward urgency of the NECROS and combines it with the more discordant guitar work of say, DIE KREUZEN or MECHT MENSCH. One might even surmise that the Midwestern feel might be a bi-product of being from Chicago, but who knows? The recording has that big, thick, bass heavy sound that brings to mind TALK IS POISON. In fact, that reference could be made with regards to some of the song writing as well. As one might guess, the lyrics are about the concerns the *modern* punk has come to expect; you know, being pissed off about this *modern* world, feeling isolated, maybe even trapped within one's own existence. But that doesn't hinder the music because the singer sounds genuinely pissed off and it doesn't hurt that he's got that nice, hot microphone signal burning directly into the recorder. When I saw the title "Anger Burning," I expected to hear some familiar riffage, but, thankfully this was just a titular homage(?). I say thankfully because I think a cover song (especially DISCHARGE) would've cheapened the overall experience. The pacing on the tape is very rapid, one song right after the other, and that gives it a completely manic feel. The solid and pounding drums really hold everything together and propel the breakneck racket in a very precise but not sterile way. The cassettes are professionally printed, which actually seems like a positive trend for demos and cassettes in general. I know that does not sound very DIY, but often times it is cheaper to have the tapes duplicated and most times the sound quality is far better than the jam box encrusted with party residue. (Jon) (7-song cassette, lyrics included $3.50 ppd. Residue, 2023 W Estes, Chicago, IL 60645, residuerecords@gmail.com, www.residue-records.com)

THE MEDVEDS – Equal parts street punk and bar rock from Boston, with songs like "Mercy Fuck," "Wipin Out Old People," "They Thought I Was Gay," and "I Hate Harold (He Pissed On Me)." This appears to be a long-running project perpetuated by a bunch of old pals whose attempts at being either humorous and/or offensive fall pretty flat when one listens to the pretty weak tunes. Comes complete with a nice bio talking about

how awesome they are and how they are just taking the world by storm, and finishes up with a radio interview. If this wasn't just a CDR I would be meaner. (Robert) (23-song CD, no lyrics, www.themedveds.com)

MESS FOLK – This is ruling depressed rock 'n' roll with so much reverb that I have an impulse to say something like, "Your band is really good, but the vocals have way too much reverb. Can you put a little less reverb on the vocals?" (Helen) (12-song cassette, no lyrics. www.myspace.com/messfolk)

MATT MIRSKY – A solo, angsty basement recording. Some of the songs are acoustic numbers that I can take or leave, but the harsher ones are mid-tempo hardcore songs with enough bile in the vocals, grate in the recording, and quality riffs to make them worthwhile. According to the artwork and lyrics, he loves *Maximum Rocknroll* and gays, even though he utters, "fuck you faggots" in the first song. (Dan) (5-song CD, lyrics included. www.myspace.com/mattmirskyinarillphysicalform)

OUTDOORSMEN – From the looks of the neon, porno shot artwork on the cover of this handmade cassette I expected some kind of horrible one-man fronted basement drum machine gore-grind garbage. Instead, what we have is sloppily played three-chord garage garbage with a similarly juvenile lyrical aesthetic. For some reason, the first song instantly reminded me of the great HELEN KELLER track, "Dump on the Chump," but minus the thick guitar sound. Also, the vocals almost remind me of Brian from FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS, but totally lacking his acerbic wit and nihilistic growl. The similarities in "offensive" artwork strengthen the assumption that this is the same OUTDOORSMEN that had a 7" come out some time last year, but who's keeping track? I could be wrong, but I get the impression that these guys are not the burly, ugly, misogynist scumbags that they portray in the band. It takes a truly scuzzy motherfucker to pull off a genuinely offensive act these days and these boys just don't seem to have the grime under their nails. Hey, maybe I am wrong, and these dudes *are* some truly scary individuals who will want to rip my fucking head off. If this is the case, I say do it. It would have way more impact than the limp tunes contained herein. I was a bit disappointed that someone forgot to hit record when taping side B. I was eagerly awaiting the tune entitled, "You Smell Dumb." (Jon) (4-song cassette, no lyrics. 175 2nd Ave, Apt. 131, Daly City, CA 94014)

SATURDAY'S KIDS – Discordant screamo from Wales. The vocals are like rusty nails and the fast/mid-tempo songs bring to mind crowded basements and sweaty men in button-up shirts standing with their backs to the audience and pained looks on their face, except that these songs are pretty good. Super moody punk, dark and introverted, and they claim to be giving these things away for free. (Robert) (5-song CD, lyrics included, saturdayskids@hotmail.co.uk)

STANDARDS – The plural-of-something-abstract seems to be becoming a formula for band names these days, especially when they have this sort of sound, but this is still a great fucking demo and the best thing I'm reviewing this month, demo or otherwise. Each of the songs does something slightly different, but all are fast, abrasive hardcore with fist-clenching riffs, a guitar that may be slightly out of tune, and a recording that uses noise and reverb to obscure everything into a wonderful blur. They round things out covering IRON CROSS' "New Breed" and it's actually awesome! (Dan) (6-song cassette, lyrics included. no address)

THIEVES – There's something about the South that makes hardcore more...well, maybe just *more*. When everything clicks and a band fires on all cylinders, the dirty frustration gets taken over by the oppressive humidity and bands just explode. Raleigh, North Carolina's THIEVES do just that on this tape: 21 songs in 23 minutes (one eight-song demo and one fucking ferocious live set). DOUBLE NEGATIVE is a good comparison, not only for the geographical proximity but also for the approach to writing killer, no-frills hardcore. The vocal delivery reminds me of BURY THE LIVING, but THIEVES is way faster than either of the fore-mentioned. Killer shits! (Robert) (21-song cassette, no lyrics, $3 ppd from Suburbanite, 1108 Kent Rd, Raleigh, NC 27606, traramone@aim.com)

T.O.F.U. – Fucked up and messy country/folk punk from the East Bay. After you get past the poor recording, the ridiculous lyrics ("Smoke that chronic / Whenever I'm on it / What the fuck did I just vomit / Oh gee please and jelly beans / Cumstains on the front of my jeans" from "Smoking Piss"), and the vaguely R. Crumb influenced art that seems to focus entirely on drug-induced blowjobs, these songs are pretty fucking catchy. I realize that this might be a lot to get past, I'm just saying there's a bit of a payoff for your efforts if you are able. This comes from SKIRTHEADS personnel (another drug-addled, sex-obsessed East Bay band—do yourself a favor if you don't already know), which is a pretty good musical reference, along with early Very Small Records, BOBBY JOE EBLOA, and throw in HUMAN BEANS to complete the Bay Area worship. The name? Oh, why it stands for "Titties On A Fucking Unicycle," of course. Duh. (Robert) (15-song CD, no lyrics—sadly, Fraggle Rock Ent, 614 Madison Ave, Albany, CA 94706)

TYVEK – This is great! I got excited listening to it, which made me feel like a total dork. It's muffled and seems like it's happening in another room in a really rad way. Like a kid watching teenagers at band practice from a bad vantage point. TYVEK plays driving yet falling apart and, yes, "shambolic" punk that's more SWELL MAPS than anything with a mohawk that asks for spare change. This has lotsa songs that are on other releases but they are sped up, and nastier i.e. more fun. It's smart and dumb at the same time; an entertaining comment on boredom. (Layla) (16-song cassette, no lyrics. Heath Moerland, 125 N Gainsborough, Royal Oak MI 48067, fagtapes@hotmail.com)

VACCUUM – The band name definitely references the music, that's for sure. A nice release to mark the existence of this incredibly short-lived project featuring members of some of your favorite Bay Area and not-so-Bay-Area bands, the only one of which I feel the need to mention being MÖRPHEME, because VACCUUM plays in a similar style. Nine tracks of CONFUSE/GAI-esque howling noise-core fill out this tape. I really love the sound of the vocals and the way they are phrased, which is at a much slower pace than the music but remain in time. This thing rulez. Limited to 100 copies, so you'd better act fast. (Justin) (9-song cassette, lyrics included. vaccuumpunx@gmail.com)

V/A – "Acne and Machine Guns" – A ten band compilation of Chicago area bands that sounds like a suburban time warp rocketing me back fifteen years to the pop punk heyday of the Windy City. There's melodic skate punk from the MUSTARD MEN, then comes ultra catchy female-fronted up-tempo basement punk from the FIZZY POPS (the best jams on the tape). The REGULARS sound like they want to be famous (like SUM 41 kind of famous), and then the BLUE WAVES get really mellow and even more commercial, but fortunately I HATE PEOPLE follow it up with a couple of rough, pissed numbers. The UNNECESSARY BUTTONS are meandering indie rock, and then I flip the tape and, *great balls of fire,* is that JERRY LEE LEWIS? Nope, it's the SASS DRAGONS! The tape wraps up with TOO CLOSE TO PERFECT, the PLEASE AND THANK YOUS, and SHORTSTOP FROM TOKYO; garage pop punk, JAWBREAKER style melodic stuff, and ska punk, respectively. (Robert) (19-song cassette, no lyrics. nervouslaughterrecords@gmail.com)

ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(DA) Diane Anastasio
(JD) Judy Balmin
(MB) Mariam Bastani
(JB) Julia Booze
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(DG) Dan Goetz
(BG) Bob Goldie
(MM) Marissa Magic
(JM) Jeff Mason
(CR) Casey Ress
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(DS) Dionne Stevens
(VX) XYosefX

ARBRE MAGIQUE #1 and only / $1 ppd
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs
I will admit that I'm not the biggest fan of tour zines, but the fact that this one is composed entirely in haikus piques my interest. The members of Surrender, from the Bay Area, have mixed things up with this little booklet describing their European tour from last summer, and I must say that it is quite entertaining, and even informative at points. Who knew that Le Mans, France has an American themed milk bar, for instance? Antics in Lyon make for my favorite snippet: "Dog licking Dan's knee / but it was the dogs (sic) owner / actually licking." The zine concludes with a brief interview with their tour booker, Julien about tips for touring Europe on the fly. Neat. (DA)
Erin Yanke / PO Box 1113 / Portland, OR 97207
eyanke@gmail.com

AT BOTH ENDS #9/10 / $18 ppd US, $19 CAD ppd Canada, $26 ppd international
8.5 x 11 – printed – 148 pgs plus two 7" records
First things first: if you're looking for a review of the double 7" that comes with this, featuring new and exclusive material from Bane, Grade (first new songs in nine years), Between Earth and Sky (members of Trial and Catharsis) and Unrestrained, check the V/A area of the record review section. OK, onto the print content of this immense package. *At Both Ends* has been the premier zine of the Northwest hardcore scene since it started in 2003, with the first few issues under the name *A Bond Still Strong*. It's been quite a few years since issue #8 came out, and in that time Stephen compiled enough material for two oversized issues and then decided to call it quits. Rather than going gentle into that good night, he combined all of the collected interviews, writings, reviews and what not into a massive (148 pages) double issue, printed on glossy paper with color covers and perfect binding. There's really too much here to go into in any depth without doubling the size of our zine review section, but I'll try to give you the basics. First off, there are a huge amount of interviews, mostly: Sick of It All, Greg Bennick (of Trial and Between Earth and Sky), Anchor, Wait In Vain, Frontline Films, Excursions Records, Shai Hulud, To Kill, Verse, Shook

Ones, Sainte Catherine, A Perfect Murder and Devotion. There is also a Bane South American tour diary, reflections on the bands Sparkmarker and Brand New Unit, seventeen pages of reviews, a history of the zine itself and several editor's reflections on zines in general, a guided tour of Tacoma by two crotchety, jaded old hardcore kids, short pieces on science fiction, touring, cryptozoology and sugar in the vegan diet, and more. While I personally am not into more than a handful of the bands interviewed or reviewed, when I add up the pieces that do interest me I end up with a page count that's longer than most zines I've seen. The graphic design on this is also amazing, looking good without looking too polished or "professional." If any of the above interests you, there are worse things you could drop twenty bucks on than this. Plus, the records are going to end up being eBay gold like all of Bane's releases, so think of it as an investment. Seriously, this is worth the price. (VX)
www.atbothendsmagazine.com

BAITLINE #9 / free
8.5 x 11 – copied – 8 pgs
I attempted to discuss this rad classified advertiser long ago, but the only time I did write about *Baitline*, the review bit it; a deadline snafu. The time is now, is all that I'm trying to say, and *Baitline* rules! A good old-fashioned mailer cock full of queer opportunities, ads- hand designed by folks making medicines or passing along useful health tips for the poor and dirty, commies and homesteaders 'round the world seeking others to form truly sustainable communities with...and who doesn't want to barter the goods for service? Music swappin' or maybe you wanna be in a video? *Baitline* is coordinated by the magic hands, and mind, of Sy Wagon. She is responsible for gems like *Those Fucking Unicorns, Kick Boxing Beatdown,* and many other fabulous zines and art projects. If you live here, you are probably familiar, but if you are not, do investigate. Sy digs the mail, so there is no excuse for being left out. Ahem, the revolution is now. And while *Baitline* does take on a unique format, the humor and importance of her past work still presents itself, although the content really is only as cool as its contributors. Its a perfect forum for skill traders, sexy seethers, and all types of caregivers to meet, way beyond the web. I have seen this zine consistently bloom; each month the ads are more varied. It looks great! The diversi-

ty of thrills being sought changes a little bit every issue so get up in there. *Baitline* is a fun read, though part of what makes it so special is that it really isn't for everyone. (DS)
Baitline / 70 Richland / SF, CA 94110

THE BLACK CLOUD #3 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 38 pages
I always love zines that document life in smaller town punk scenes, whose inhabitants are often infinitely better at finding fun, interesting, and/or ridiculous things to do than their big city counterparts, and this issue of *The Black Cloud* offers a glimpse into punk life in Columbus, OH. There's a bit about the city and the nature of its DIY culture that serves as an introduction, as well as entertaining stories about donut shops, diaper parties, carefully placed dildos, working at Kroger's, and the main writer's debaucherous return to Columbus that has him getting drunk and sneaking into a hot tub instead of resting up for the next day's apartment hunting. This zine kept me amused for its entirety, and anyone who's done their time in a similar area can probably identify with these stories. (DG)
369 E 15th Ave. / Columbus, OH 43201

COMETBUS #53 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 60 pgs
You can tell this zine was made in New York, the attitude is dripping from the pages. It's a welcome turn for me, I can live vicariously this way. Hanging out with Bent Outta Shape, listening to a cherished wingnut or two, eating matzoh ball soup after midnight, diners diners diners, sewer livin', poems even, and boy, what a scene report. But there's always a darkness. The contributions in this issue are epistolary stories of sickness and death, if there's not enough of that to go around. I mean it, really thick. But what really gets me is the interview/visit with John Holmstrom, publisher of *Punk* magazine and comic artist. Who knew how complicated it was back then? Truly compelling as always...you won't want to miss this one. (JB)

Cometbus / PO Box 4726 / Berkeley, CA 94704

CRACKS IN THE CONCRETE #12 / donation
5.5 x 8 – copied – 56 pgs
Luke has produced another fine issue. Every page reeks with disgust for statist, authoritarian pigs. This time there are a number of reprints, from Earth First! Journal (I think two pieces), Toward The Destruction of Schooling, Fire To The Prisons, quotes from the work of comedian Bill Hicks, and the back cover is excerpted from The Cunningham Amendment. There is a letters column, a series of news blurbs, and a longer piece, light on details, mentioning many people who lives were hurt or ruined under the banner of a War on (certain) Drugs. I wouldn't call this mandatory, but the price is right (please send at least $2 if you can) and I've enjoyed every issue I've seen. (JM)
Luke / PO Box 2748 / Tucson, AZ 85702

DISTORT #26 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 12 pgs
This issue of *Distort* has one simple focus, Rikk Agnew's *All By Myself* album. For those unfamiliar Rikk was penning a second LP for the Adolescents, got kicked out of the band, and used the songs for a solo project. In recent years *All By Myself* has been getting recognition as a punk classic and *Distort*'s editor, Daniel, dedicated this issue of the zine to the back-story behind the record. The overall concept does have a hero-worship vibe and is undoubtedly obsessive, but I like Daniel's writing and I'm a fan of *All By Myself,* the Adolescents, and early DI, so I'm on board. Daniel breaks the record down song-by-song and interviews Rikk, Rikk's then girlfriend Linda Taylor, and Frontier Records' owner Lisa Fancher. Linda was the muse for the song "Everyday," designed the t-shirt that Rikk wore on the cover of *All By Myself,* and this issue of *Distort* also features a centerfold of her art. Rikk unfolds some interesting bits of LA punk history, although he is definitely self-aggrandizing, but I generally get a kick out of reading stuff like this as long as the stories are worthwhile. Rikk's got good stories. In addition to interviewing Rikk, Linda, and Lisa, Daniel offers his relationship with and analysis of the record, and includes relevant news clippings and old reviews from various publications. Honestly, I planned to read a couple pages before settling in and watching a few *Curb Your Enthusiasm* episodes, but I found the story to be compelling enough that I powered through and read all twelve pages in one sitting. I wish it was longer, but as Daniel states, someone needs to sit Rikk and friends down for an oral history, so maybe this issue of *Distort* will serve as a catalyst for that... (CI)
DX / PO Box 239 / North Carlton / Victoria / 3054 / Australia
distorttheworld@gmail.com

EAVES OF ASS #7 / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs
From the ashes of the worldwide economy's collapse to the streets of Louisville, Craven reflects on the impact of larger events on his own existence as a writer, cab driver, and hopeful medical research subject. His stories include hosing golf fans, meeting strangers on the Amtrak, and losing "the shit lottery". It's an interesting account that sometimes loses its thread, but overall serves as all good zines do, as an immediate document of the life of an individual on the margins of society. (CR)
Craven Rock / 10511 Phinnen Ave N / Seattle, WA 98133
eavesofass@yahoo.com

EQUALIZING DISTORT Vol.9, #5 / $?
11 x 17 – copied – 24 pgs
The whole *Equalizing Distort* effort is enormously inspiring to me. It's a punk hardcore radio program, a zine, and a blog that is dedicated to worldwide music, while naturally emphasizing the Toronto scene. It's so cool to see this type of underground music collective—never mind a killer radio show—existing in this day and age. Each issue of the zine features transcripts from bands interviewed on the show, along with accompanying photos, album artwork, fliers, etc.; the bands featured this time are Hazardous Waste and a 1987 interview with Nomind. Finishing off the issue is the, always enjoyable, record review section and some tidbits and upcoming events in the local Toronto scene. I'm not sure how much an issue costs, but check out their blog page for info, as well as podcasts of past shows and pdf versions of all back issues. (BG)
Equalizing Distort / 21 Foundry Ave. Unit 5 / Toronto, ON M6H 4K7 / Canada
equalizingxdistort.blogspot.com

GUTWRENCH #2 / free or trade?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied - 16 pgs
This is an awesome zine. Not-too-fussy renderings of a band of merries that have something very shitty happen to them while they are away on tour. The story is told in a way that I care not to criticize of. I do like the personal stuff when it is interesting. Choosing wisely what stories to divulge makes all the difference. I care and want to read more about this life. (DS)
Gutwrench Zine / 323 S. Cherry St / Richmond, VA 23220

GUTWRENCH #3 / free or trade?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
... Uh-oh, someone let the dogs out in #3. This is so cute and funny without taking itself too seriously at all. I am now officially a fan of *Gutwrench*. (DS)
Gutwrench Zine / 323 S. Cherry St / Richmond, VA 23220

HAPPY PANTS / free
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
This zine is all about one dude's personal experiences, adventures and impressions. The guy that writes it comes off mostly as an out of touch, brodawgeddy dude type that likes to skate, drink beer, and watch some football. But the writing is clear and kept me interested and the personal stories go to some unexpected places. Like my roommate just said, "I like it when dumb people write well." I don't know if he's actually dumb, but he's not losing his mind trying to convince you that he's smart. There's three parts in this issue titled "Along for the ride." The first is about the author's experience skating at Penn Valley Park, which as he was warned, is surrounded by a gay cruising spot. Some of the skaters have the delusional idea that skate park was put there by the police to deter the cruising and also think that if they leave the fenced in skate park area, that they will be aggressively sexually propositioned by other men. Yeah. Gay men are always jumping out from behind cars and surprise penetrating straight men. What a scourge. The next part is about the author's month living in Kenya on a work assignment. His impressions of Africa and Africans come off as pretty clueless and mildly offensive, but not so offensive, because those comments are so Forest Gump-y. It's almost what it might be like to read about Holden Caulfield getting dropped off in Africa and trying to pass the time. The last portion is about punk rock shows and the scene in the North Park area of San Diego. He says people from Arizona want "to park their SUVs right on top of their final destination." Arizonans, you have been slandered. Send letters. You would think after I basically called something dumb so many times, I just wouldn't like it, but I kind of do. Fancy that. I would like to read more. (JD)
happypantszine@gmail.com

HOKKU #4 / $1 US, .50 euro Europe, 20p UK, trades preferred
5.75 x 7.75 – copied – 12 pgs
The grubby, crusty aesthetic is in full effect on the front cover. There's more writing than aesthetic inside. This short read is pretty much just two pieces—an interview with Beginning of the End, and a primer on Daoism, an early Eastern philosophy still practiced widely in the East, and also in the West. This primer wasn't particularly clear to me, but Daoism's four main principles (as discussed here), though simple, are a little difficult to grasp with the typical Western mode of thought. This could be a good zine to trade for, or pick up for some change at a gig. I kind of like it, even though there isn't much to it, in true Daoist style. (JM)
Hokku / c/o Tristan Gemmell / 3 Little Burn / Sway Lymington / Hants SO41 6DZ / UK

IF AN AGENT KNOCKS / no price listed
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 52 pgs
Yet another publication giving basic answers to hypothetical questions about how to deal with visits, harassment and surveillance by pigs of various types. From the knock on the door, to subpoenas, entrapment, phone taps and grand juries, the folks at the Center for Constitutional Rights provide all of the legal answers you might need in a fucked up situation relating to government authorities. Of course, all of this information has been made available within punk and anarchist circles in a number of other more DIY publications throughout the years, but it can never hurt to have the same points reiterated: *Do not talk to cops. Do not answer their questions. Do not let them search you or enter any premises without a warrant. Demand to see their warrant.* It can't hurt to know what few rights you allegedly have when dealing with the police. With its glossy cover and paper and professional-style design, this seems particularly targeted towards more mainstream lefty/"progressive" types, who it seems still need to learn some basic lessons on these simple issues. (VX)
www.ccrjustice.org

LEFT OF THE DIAL "Remix" / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 30 pages
I'm only vaguely familiar with this zine, but this throwback cut-and-paste retrospective issue (it's normally a printed, full-color mag, though I think it might only be a blog now aside from this issue) collects some of their best interviews from over the years, including great ones with Keith Morris, Kira Roessler, Steve Soto (Adolescents), Gregg Turner (Angry Samoans), John Talley-Jones (The Urinals), and Channel 3. The interviewers all seem really informed, which makes for some great conversations, and even as someone who is fairly knowledgeable about the bands and scenes covered, I still got a lot out of these interviews. I get the impression that some of the layouts were preserved from the originals, while others were revamped for this issue, but either way there are a lot of cool photos and especially old flyers reproduced herein. Not sure exactly how to get this, but I say write the email below for more info if this seems like your thing. (DG)
2301 Norfolk St. #1 / Houston, TX 77098
leftofthedialmag@hotmail.com

NOSEBLEED #1
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs
Dear men: take note. This zine is the shit and it's fucking important. It is rare that I find zines that fit into the category of "perzine" (cringe) that I actually enjoy reading and simultaneously learn from. This one includes a few contributions, including an interview with Tim Kerr about the Young Lions Conspiracy, which may cause you to re-evaluate your life entirely. This interview touches on, what I deem to be, a major theme of this zine: active participation in creating community and in creating lives for ourselves that we are proud of living. In reading this zine, I got a sense of urgency from the contributors, and by the time I reached the final words on the back cover, I was on the edge of my seat, thinking about how to transform my immediate, slightly jaded, punk community. The editor

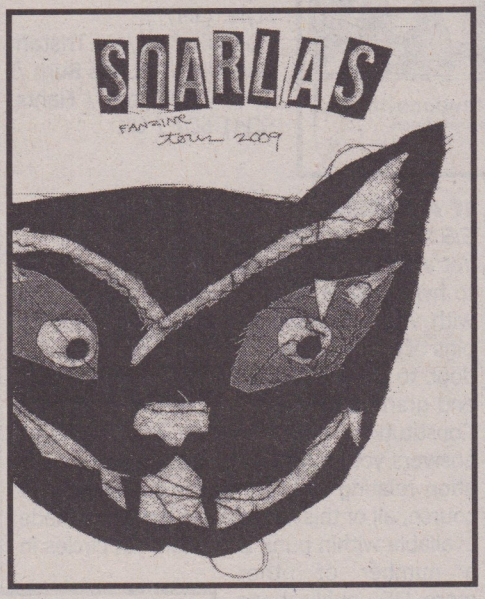
rounds it all out with a piece about being inspired by the punks in LA and how damn important it is to feel moved enough by the people that surround us to dance and to challenge each other and ourselves. This is followed by a call to action for men to question the ways in which they have been socialized to interact with each other on emotional levels. In closing, I just want to quickly dispute the notion that moustaches are evil, which is brought up in the piece entitled "Some Moustaches Thru Time." I ask, what about us sisters with whiskers? (DA)
Nosebleed HQ / PO Box 40711 / SF, CA 94140

OAKLANDOLYMPIA #1 / $2-3 ppd, $3-4 international, trades okay
4.25 x 5.5 – (color) copied – 16 pgs
I have a soft spot in my heart for photo zines, although they seem to go by too fast and it is hard to sit and really give time and head space to fully appreciate it all with such little writing to go with it. Bright and lonely, this piece has a list of titles on the back cover to add some intrigue and a little context, but really it's what you see is what you get: a brief, sensory glint. (JB)
Bryan / 324 Peralta St. / Oakland, CA 94607

RIOT 77 / $5
8.5 x 11 – printed – 51 pgs
Typical columns/interviews/reviews mainly focusing on Billy Childish and his crew in this issue. There is an interview with Holly Golightly and a story about Lux Interior. Decent, typical. (MM)
c/o Cian Hynes / PO Box 11342 / Dublin, Ireland

ROADKILL #11 / $3
7 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Roadkill is an eclectic zine full of random writings, artwork, photos, and all sorts of things that make it an enjoyable read. The writing is mostly a personal effort in the form of observations, poems, and brief essays/rants, but there are also reviews, cartoons, scene bulletins, and other random items contributed by others that make this all the more enjoyable. There were also a few older issues thrown in with this copy, and I'm not sure if they were reviewed in the past or not so I'll at least mention that they fall along the same lines, with the only real difference being that some volumes having more pages than others. My one and only complaint about *Roadkill* is the same I have for a lot of zines: too much empty space on some pages. Otherwise, I would advise checking out this interesting title, especially if you live in the Kansas City area. (BG)
Roadkill Studio / 3308 Troost Ave. / Kansas City, MS 64109
roadkillandcheapthrills@mail.org / myspace.com/roadkillkc

RUM-MUFFEL / $?
7.5 x 5 – printed – 24 pgs
A collaboration between *Morgenmuffel* and *Rum-lad* zines, both outta the UK, both combining wry comments on the traveling punk/activist life with charming illustrations. This is about a hiking trip they took together, which made for an OK read, but was not as interesting as other issues of *Morgenmuffel* I have read, which from what I remember were more focused on the international protest movement. Both writers have a sort of anarcho-Enid Byton quality to their work, in that it's sorta nice and bucolic, all about the country side and being with your friends. Eating delicious food and having adventures, but you know, also going to protest G8 and giving talks about the politics of what you consume... In short, this is a pretty rad effort, and if you already know and like their other zines you will dig this certainly. (LG)
morningmuffel@yahoo.com / stevejipwit@hotmail.com



SOCIETY SUCKERS / VII and VIII / $5ppd, $3 in person trades OK
8 x 5.25 – printed – 64 pgs
This is a Canadian version of *Hamburger Eyes*. Each zine contains the work of different photographers; just images, no text, and the photographers are mostly from the same skate/art world as those contained in the aforementioned *Hamburger Eyes*. These issues have work from the renowned *Epicly Later'd* blogger and skate photographer Patrick O'Dell and the most excellent Angela Boatwright, as well as Megan Rennie, Kevin Alen, Alexander Martinez and Francis Allen. There are pictures of girls pouring beer on themselves, kids with huge stage bound eyes in the front row of metal shows, random bratty looking pro skaters, dudes with beards, punk, animals and the humans that cause their misery. I like this type of zine, I don't always buy them when I am at Needles and Pens, where they stock a zillion of them seemingly. But I like flipping through them and definitely pick up the good ones. There was some great work in here, definitely a good deal—send ten bucks and get both zines. Better yet, make your own zine and do a trade, or spend your time dreaming of rich fantasies. You know. (LG)
5345 St Dominique / Montreal, Quebec / H2T 1V5 Canada
societysuckers.com/dpelisser@gmail.com

SNARLAS Tour 2009 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
I really liked this tour diary, it makes me wanna track down some music by these kids. It goes beyond just the "we played with these bands... we got wasted... we drove to the next town." It definitely has stuff like that, but along with that, it had some mad libs, lists of injuries everyone sustained, lists of stuff that disappeared at shows, and so on. One of the funniest things is a daily blurb of what they planned to do with their spare time and what they ended up doing. I'm way into it. (MM)
PO Box 29 / Athens, OH 45701

THAT'S NOT SKANKING RECORDS FANZINE #7 / free
8.5 x 6 – copied – 24 pgs
This zine primarily highlights the ska bands released by That's Not Skanking records out of Manchester, England. The content is largely interviews, including one punk band, the Stupids from Ipswich, England that formed a thrashy, hardcore, skate punk band in 1984, who are now touring once again. There is a section for live show reviews (including a Green Day concert), CD reviews (including bands on Fat Wreck Chords and Epitaph), a fanzine review and a section for announcements about upcoming shows and releases. While I am not a ska fan and *MRR* does not review ska, I didn't really feel connected to the zine except for momentary intrigue about Beat the Red Light, a band that wants to combine their ska stylings with elements of grindcore and black metal and maybe even write a "dub doom song." The columns section covers many of the same themes often discussed in DIY— people who refuse to pay for shows, Vegan/veggie life vs. meat eating (which turned into a plea for bike riding instead of car driving). The most interesting article is the information about the postal strikes going on the in the UK and the articles author asserting that punks be involved in their community. I dig that... (MB)
113 Hacienda / Whitworth St West / Manchester / M15DB / England / UNITED KINGDOM

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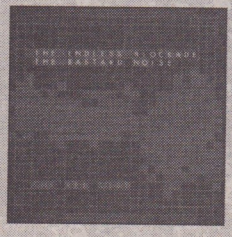

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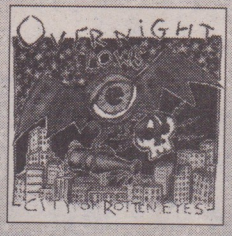

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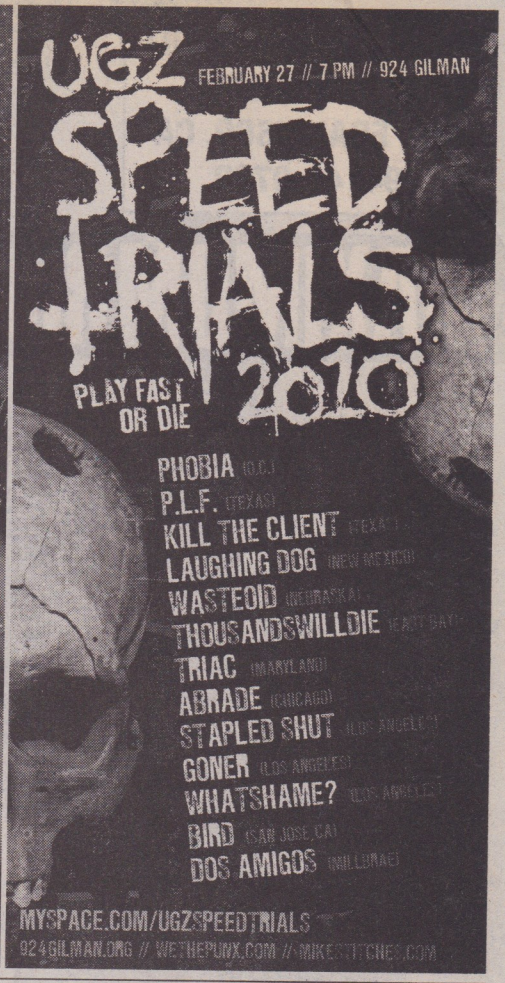

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